

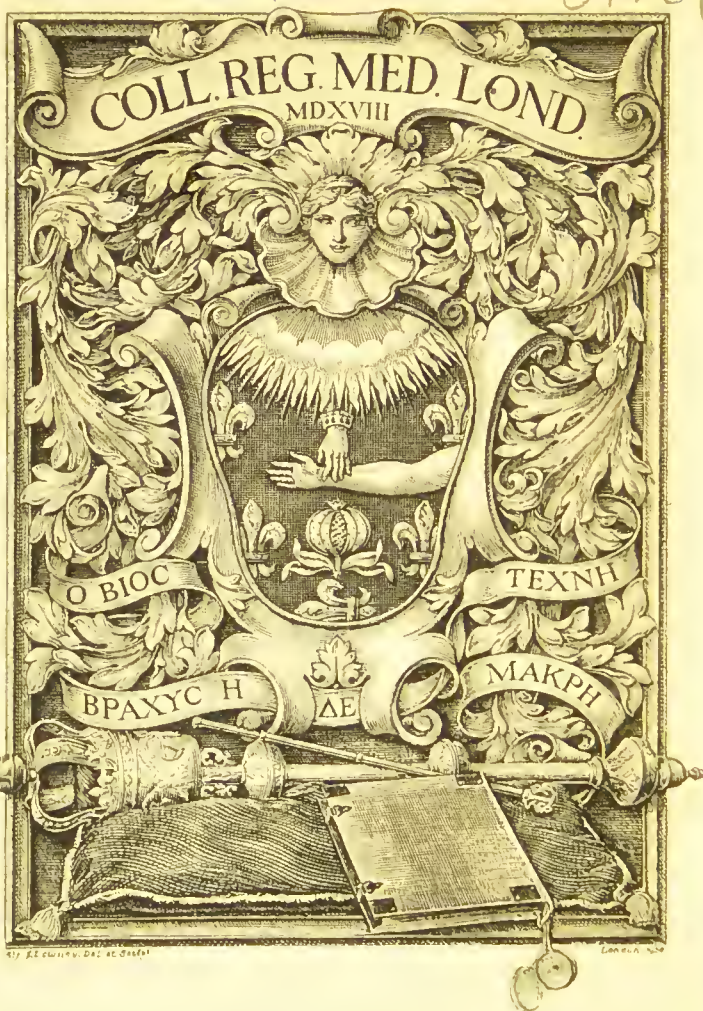




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RELIGIO MEDICI

AND OTHER ESSAYS

*UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME*

G. F. WATTS

A BIOGRAPHY AND AN ESTIMATE

BY

J. E. PHYTHIAN

WITH THIRTY-TWO ILLUSTRATIONS .

---

E. GRANT RICHARDS







*Sir Thomas Browne.*

# RELIGIO MEDICI

AND OTHER ESSAYS

BY

SIR THOMAS BROWNE



LONDON

E. GRANT RICHARDS

1906

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*A Letter sent upon the information of animadversions to  
come forth, upon the imperfect and surreptitious copy of  
Religio Medici, whilst this true one was going to press.*

HONOURABLE SIR,—Give your servant, who hath ever honoured you, leave to take notice of a book at present in the press, intituled (as I am informed) Animadversions upon a Treatise lately printed under the name of “Religio Medici”; hereof, I am advertised, you have descended to be the author. Worthy Sir, permit your servant to affirm there is contained therein nothing that can deserve the reason of your contradictions, much less the candour of your animadversions; and to certify the truth thereof, that book (whereof I do acknowledge myself the author) was penned many years past, and (what cannot escape your apprehension) with no intention for the press, or the least desire to oblige the faith of any man to its assertions. But what hath more especially emboldened my pen unto you at present is, that the same piece, contrived in my private study, and as an exercise unto myself, rather than exercitation for any other, having past from my hand under a broken and imperfect copy, by frequent transcription it still run forward into corruption, and after the addition of some things, omission of others, and transposition of many, without

my assent or privacy the liberty of these times committed it unto the press ; whence it issued so disguised, the author without distinction could not acknowledge it. Having thus miscarried, within a few weeks I shall, God willing, deliver unto the press the true and intended original (whereof in the mean time your worthy self may command a view), otherwise whenever that copy shall be extant, it will most clearly appear how far the text hath been mistaken, and all observations, glosses, or exercitations thereon, will in a great part impugn the printer or transcriber, rather than the author. If, after that, you shall esteem it worth your vacant hours to discourse thereon, you shall but take that liberty which I assume myself, that is, freely to abound in your sense, as I have done in my own. However ye shall determine, you shall sufficiently honour me in the vouchsafe of your refute, and I oblige the whole world in the occasion of your pen.

Your Servant,

T. B.

*Norwich, March 3, 1642.*

## TO THE READER

CERTAINLY that man were greedy of life, who should desire to live when all the world were at an end ; and he must needs be very impatient, who would repine at death in the society of all things that suffer under it. Had not almost every man suffered by the press, or were not the tyranny thereof become universal, I had not wanted reason for complaint : but in times wherein I have lived to behold the highest perversion of that excellent invention, the name of his Majesty defamed, the honour of Parliament depraved, the writings of both depravedly, anticipatively, counterfeitedly imprinted : complaints may seem ridiculous in private persons ; and men of my condition may be as incapable of affronts, as hopeless of their reparations. And truly had not the duty I owe unto the importunity of friends, and the allegiance I must ever acknowledge unto truth, prevailed with me ; the inactivity of my disposition might have made these sufferings continual, and time, that brings other things to light, should have satisfied me in the remedy of its oblivion. But, because things evidently false are not only printed, but many things of truth most falsely set forth ; in this latter I could not but think myself engaged : for, though we have no power to redress the former, yet in the other the reparation being within ourselves, I have at present represented unto the world a full and intended copy of that

piece, which was most imperfectly and surreptitiously published before.

This I confess, about seven years past, with some others of affinity thereto, for my private exercise and satisfaction, I had at leisurable hours composed ; which being communicated unto one, it became common unto many, and was by transcription successively corrupted, until it arrived in a most depraved copy at the press. He that shall peruse that work, and shall take notice of sundry particulars and personal expressions therein, will easily discern the intention was not publick : and, being a private exercise directed to myself, what is delivered therein was rather a memorial unto me, than an example or rule unto any other : and therefore, if there be any singularity therein correspondent unto the private conceptions of any man, it doth not advantage them ; or if dissentaneous thereunto, it no way overthrows them. It was penned in such a place, and with such disadvantage, that (I protest), from the first setting of pen unto paper, I had not the assistance of any good book, whereby to promote my invention, or relieve my memory ; and therefore there might be many real lapses therein, which others might take notice of, and more than I suspected myself. It was set down many years past, and was the sense of my conceptions at that time, not an immutable law unto my advancing judgment at all times ; and therefore there might be many things therein plausible unto my passed apprehension, which are not agreeable unto my present self. There are many things delivered rhetorically, many expressions therein merely tropical, and as they best illustrate my intention ; and therefore also there are many things to be taken in a soft and flexible sense, and not to be



called unto the rigid test of reason. Lastly, all that is contained therein is in submission unto maturer discernments ; and, as I have declared, [I] shall no further father them than the best and [most] learned judgments shall authorize them : under favour of which considerations, I have made its secrecy publick, and committed the truth thereof to every ingenuous reader.

THOMAS BROWNE.



## RELIGIO MEDICI

For my religion, though there be several circumstances that might persuade the world I have none at all,—as the general scandal of my profession,—the natural course of my studies,—the indifferency of my behaviour and discourse in matters of religion (neither violently defending one, nor with that common ardour and contention opposing another),—yet, in despite hereof, I dare without usurpation assume the honourable style of a Christian. Not that I merely owe this title to the font, my education, or the clime wherein I was born, as being bred up either to confirm those principles my parents instilled into my unwary understanding, or by a general consent proceed in the religion of my country ; but that having, in my riper years and confirmed judgment, seen and examined all, I find myself obliged, by the principles of grace, and the law of mine own reason, to embrace no other name but this : neither doth herein my zeal so far make me forget the general charity I owe unto humanity, as rather to hate than pity Turks, Infidels, and (what is worse) Jews ; rather contenting myself to enjoy that happy style, than maligning those who refuse so glorious a title.

*Quousque patiere, bone Jesu !*

*Judæi te semel, ego sæpius crucifixi ;*

Illi in Asia, ego in Britania,  
 Gallia, Germania ;  
 Bone Jesu, miserere mei, et Judæorum.<sup>1</sup>

SECT. II.—But, because the name of a Christian is become too general to express our faith,—there being a geography of religion as well as lands, and every clime not only distinguished by its laws and limits, but circumscribed by its doctrines and rules of faith,—to be particular, I am of that reformed new-cast religion, wherein I dislike nothing but the name; of the same belief our Saviour taught, the apostles disseminated, the fathers authorized, and the martyrs confirmed; but, by the sinister ends of princes, the ambition and avarice of prelates, and the fatal corruption of times so decayed, impaired, and fallen from its native beauty, that it required the careful and charitable hands of these times to restore it to its primitive integrity. Now, the accidental occasion whereupon, the slender means whereby, the low and abject condition of the person by whom, so good a work was set on foot, which in our adversaries beget contempt and scorn, fill me with wonder, and are the very same objections the insolent pagans first cast at Christ and his disciples.

SECT. III.—Yet I have not so shaken hands with those desperate resolutions who had rather venture at large their decayed bottom, than bring her in to be new-trimmed in the dock,—who had rather promiscuously retain all, than abridge any, and obstinately be what they are, than what they have been,—as to stand

<sup>1</sup> “How long wilt Thou suffer, good Jesus? The Jews crucified Thee once, I have crucified Thee more often: they in Asia, I in Britain, Gaul and Germany: good Jesus, have pity on me and the Jews.”—ED.

in diameter and sword's point with them. We have reformed from them, not against them : for, omitting those impropriations and terms of scurrility betwixt us, which only difference our affections, and not our cause, there is between us one common name and appellation, one faith and necessary body of principles common to us both ; and therefore I am not scrupulous to converse and live with them, to enter their churches in defect of ours, and either pray with them or for them. I could never perceive any rational consequence from those many texts which prohibit the children of Israel to pollute themselves with the temples of the heathens ; we being all Christians, and not divided by such detested impieties as might profane our prayers, or the place wherein we make them ; or that a resolved conscience may not adore her Creator anywhere, especially in places devoted to his service ; where, if their devotions offend him, mine may please him ; if theirs profane it, mine may hallow it. Holy water and crucifix (dangerous to the common people) deceive not my judgment, nor abuse my devotion at all. I am, I confess, naturally inclined to that which misguided zeal terms superstition : my common conversation I do acknowledge austere, my behaviour full of rigour, sometimes not without morosity ; yet, at my devotion I love to use the civility of my knee, my hat, and hand, with all those outward and sensible motions which may express or promote my invisible devotion. I should violate my own arm rather than a church ; nor willingly deface the name of saint or martyr. At the sight of a cross, or crucifix, I can dispense with my hat, but scarce with the thought or memory of my Saviour. I cannot laugh at, but rather pity, the fruit-



less journeys of pilgrims, or condemn the miserable condition of friars ; for, though misplaced in circumstances, there is something in it of devotion. I could never hear the Ave-Mary bell \* without an elevation, or think it a sufficient warrant, because they erred in one circumstance, for me to err in all,—that is, in silence and dumb contempt. Whilst, therefore, they directed their devotions to her, I offered mine to God ; and rectified the errors of their prayers by rightly ordering mine own. At a solemn procession I have wept abundantly, while my consorts, blind with opposition and prejudice, have fallen into an excess of scorn and laughter. There are, questionless, both in Greek, Roman, and African churches, solemnities and ceremonies, whereof the wiser zeals do make a Christian use ; and which stand condemned by us, not as evil in themselves, but as allurements and baits of superstition to those vulgar heads that look askint on the face of truth, and those unstable judgments that cannot consist in the narrow point and centre of virtue without a reel or stagger to the circumference.

SECT. IV.—As there were many reformers, so likewise many reformatiions ; every country proceeding in a particular way and method, according as their national interest, together with their constitution and clime, inclined them : some angrily and with extremity ; others calmly and with mediocrity, not rending, but easily dividing, the community, and leaving an honest possibility of a reconciliation ;—which, though peace-

\* A church-bell, that tolls every day at six and twelve of the clock ; at the hearing whereof every one, in what place soever, either of house or street, betakes himself to his prayer, which is commonly directed to the Virgin.

able spirits do desire, and may conceive that revolution of time and the mercies of God may effect, yet that judgment that shall consider the present antipathies between the two extremes,—their contrarieties in condition, affection, and opinion,—may, with the same hopes, expect a union in the poles of heaven.

SECT. v.—But, to difference myself nearer, and draw into a lesser circle ; there is no church whose every part so squares unto my conscience, whose articles, constitutions, and customs, seem so consonant unto reason, and, as it were, framed to my particular devotion, as this whereof I hold my belief—the church of England ; to whose faith I am a sworn subject, and therefore, in a double obligation, subscribe unto her articles, and endeavour to observe her constitutions : whatsoever is beyond, as points indifferent, I observe, according to the rules of my private reason, or the humour and fashion of my devotion ; neither believing this because Luther affirmed it, nor disapproving that because Calvin hath disavouched it. I condemn not all things in the council of Trent, nor approve all in the synod of Dort. In brief, where the Scripture is silent, the church is my text ; where that speaks, 'tis but my comment ; where there is a joint silence of both, I borrow not the rules of my religion from Rome or Geneva, but from the dictates of my own reason. It is an unjust scandal of our adversaries, and a gross error in ourselves, to compute the nativity of our religion from Henry the Eighth ; who, though he rejected the Pope, refused not the faith of Rome, and effected no more than what his own predecessors desired and essayed in ages past, and it was conceived the state of Venice would have attempted in our days.

It is as uncharitable a point in us to fall upon those popular scurrilities and opprobrious scoffs of the Bishop of Rome, to whom, as a temporal prince, we owe the duty of good language. I confess there is a cause of passion between us : by his sentence I stand excommunicated ; heretic is the best language he affords me : yet can no ear witness I ever returned to him the name of antichrist, man of sin, or whore of Babylon. It is the method of charity to suffer without reaction : those usual satires and invectives of the pulpit may perchance produce a good effect on the vulgar, whose ears are opener to rhetoric than logic ; yet do they, in no wise, confirm the faith of wiser believers, who know that a good cause needs not be patroned by passion, but can sustain itself upon a temperate dispute.

SECT. VI.—I could never divide myself from any man upon the difference of an opinion, or be angry with his judgment for not agreeing with me in that from which, perhaps, within a few days, I should dissent myself. I have no genius to disputes in religion : and have often thought it wisdom to decline them, especially upon a disadvantage, or when the cause of truth might suffer in the weakness of my patronage. Where we desire to be informed, 'tis good to contest with men above ourselves ; but, to confirm and establish our opinions, 'tis best to argue with judgments below our own, that the frequent spoils and victories over their reasons may settle in ourselves an esteem and confirmed opinion of our own. Every man is not a proper champion for truth, nor fit to take up the gauntlet in the cause of verity ; many, from the ignorance of these maxims, and an inconsiderate zeal unto truth, have too rashly charged the troops of error and remain as

trophies unto the enemies of truth. A man may be in as just possession of truth as of a city, and yet be forced to surrender; 'tis therefore far better to enjoy her with peace than to hazard her on a battle. If, therefore, there rise any doubts in my way, I do forget them, or at least defer them, till my better settled judgment and more manly reason be able to resolve them; for I perceive every man's own reason is his best Œdipus, and will upon a reasonable truce, find a way to loose those bonds wherewith the subtleties of error have enchained our more flexible and tender judgments. In philosophy, where truth seems doublefaced, there is no man more paradoxical than myself: but in divinity I love to keep the road; and, though not in an implicit, yet an humble faith, follow the great wheel of the church, by which I move; not reserving any proper poles, or motion from the epicycle of my own brain. By this means I leave no gap for heresy, schisms, or errors, of which at present, I hope I shall not injure truth to say, I have no taint or tincture. I must confess my greener studies have been polluted with two or three; not any begotten in the latter centuries, but old and obsolete, such as could never have been revived but by such extravagant and irregular heads as mine. For, indeed, heresies perish not with their authors; but, like the river Arethusa, though they lose their currents in one place, they rise up again in another. One general council is not able to extirpate one single heresy: it may be cancelled for the present; but revolution of time, and the like aspects from heaven, will restore it, when it will flourish till it be condemned again. For, as though there were a metempsychosis, and the soul of one man passed into another, opinions do

find, after certain revolutions, men and minds like those that first begat them. To see ourselves again, we need not look for Plato's year:\* every man is not only himself; there have been many Diogeneses, and as many Timons, though but few of that name; men are lived over again; the world is now as it was in ages past; there was none then, but there hath been some one since, that parallels him, and is, as it were, his revived self.

SECT. VII.—Now, the first of mine was that of the Arabians; that the souls of men perished with their bodies, but should yet be raised again at the last day: not that I did absolutely conceive a mortality of the soul, but, if that were (which faith, not philosophy, hath yet thoroughly disproved), and that both entered the grave together, yet I held the same conceit thereof that we all do of the body, that it should rise again. Surely it is but the merits of our unworthy natures, if we sleep in darkness until the last alarm. A serious reflex upon my own unworthiness did make me backward from challenging this prerogative of my soul: so that I might enjoy my Saviour at the last, I could with patience be nothing almost unto eternity. The second was that of Origen; that God would not persist in his vengeance for ever, but, after a definite time of his wrath, would release the damned souls from torture; which error I fell into upon a serious contemplation of the great attribute of God, his mercy; and did a little cherish it in myself, because I found therein no malice, and a ready weight to sway me from the other extreme

\* A revolution of certain thousand years, when all things should return unto their former estate, and he be teaching again in his school, as when he delivered this opinion.



of despair, whereunto melancholy and contemplative natures are too easily disposed. A third there is, which I did never positively maintain or practise, but have often wished it had been consonant to truth, and not offensive to my religion ; and that is, the prayer for the dead ; whereunto I was inclined from some charitable inducements, whereby I could scarce contain my prayers for a friend at the ringing of a bell, or behold his corpse without an orison for his soul. 'Twas a good way, methought, to be remembered by posterity, and far more noble than a history. These opinions I never maintained with pertinacity, or endeavoured to inveigle any man's belief unto mine, nor so much as ever revealed, or disputed them with my dearest friends ; by which means I neither propagated them in others, nor confirmed them in myself : but, suffering them to flame upon their own substance, without addition of new fuel, they went out insensibly of themselves ; therefore these opinions, though condemned by lawful councils, were not heresies in me, but bare errors, and single lapses of my understanding, without a joint depravity of my will. Those have not only depraved understandings, but diseased affections, which cannot enjoy a singularity without a heresy, or be the author of an opinion without they be of a sect also. This was the villany of the first schism of Lucifer ; who was not content to err alone, but drew into his faction many legions of spirits ; and upon this experience he tempted only Eve, well understanding the communicable nature of sin, and that to deceive but one was tacitly and upon consequence to delude them both.

SECT. VIII.—That heresies should arise, we have the prophecy of Christ ; but, that old ones should be

abolished, we hold no prediction. That there must be heresies, is true, not only in our church, but also in any other : even in the doctrines heretical there will be superheresies ; and Arians, not only divided from the church, but also among themselves : for heads that are disposed unto schism, and complexionally propense to innovation, are naturally indisposed for a community ; nor will be ever confined unto the order or economy of one body ; and therefore, when they separate from others, they knit but loosely among themselves ; nor contented with a general breach or dichotomy with their church, do subdivide and mince themselves almost into atoms. 'Tis true, that men of singular parts and humours have not been free from singular opinions and conceits in all ages ; retaining something, not only beside the opinion of their own church, or any other, but also any particular author ; which, notwithstanding, a sober judgment may do without offence or heresy ; for there are yet, after all the decrees of councils, and the niceties of the schools, many things, untouched, unimagined, wherein the liberty of an honest reason may play and expatiate with security, and far without the circle of a heresy.

SECT. IX.—As for those wingy mysteries in divinity, and airy subtleties in religion, which have unhinged the brains of better heads, they never stretched the *pia mater*<sup>1</sup> of mine. Methinks there be not impossibilities enough in religion for an active faith : the deepest mysteries ours contains have not only been illustrated, but maintained, by syllogism and the rule of reason. I love to lose myself in a mystery ; to pursue my reason to an *O altitudo* !<sup>2</sup> 'Tis my solitary recreation to pose

<sup>1</sup> "Holy Mother."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "Height."—ED.

my apprehension with those involved enigmas and riddles of the Trinity—incarnation and resurrection. I can answer all the objections of Satan and my rebellious reason with that odd resolution I learned of Tertullian, *Certum est quia impossibile est*.<sup>1</sup> I desire to exercise my faith in the difficultest point ; for, to credit ordinary and visible objects is not faith, but persuasion. Some believe the better for seeing Christ's sepulchre ; and, when they have seen the Red Sea, doubt not of the miracle. Now, contrarily, I bless myself, and am thankful, that I lived not in the days of miracles ; that I never saw Christ nor his disciples. I would not have been one of those Israelites that passed the Red Sea ; nor one of Christ's patients, on whom he wrought his wonders : then had my faith been thrust upon me ; nor should I enjoy that greater blessing pronounced to all that believe and saw not. 'Tis an easy and necessary belief, to credit what our eye and sense hath examined. I believe he was dead, and buried, and rose again ; and desire to see him in his glory, rather than to contemplate him in his cenotaph or sepulchre. Nor is this much to believe ; as we have reason, we owe this faith unto history : they only had the advantage of a bold and noble faith, who lived before his coming, who, upon obscure prophecies and mystical types, could raise a belief, and expect apparent impossibilities.

SECT. x.—'Tis true, there is an edge in all firm belief, and with an easy metaphor we may say, the sword of faith ; but in these obscurities I rather use it in the adjunct the apostle gives it, a buckler ; under which I conceive a wary combatant may lie invulnerable. Since I was of understanding to know that we

<sup>1</sup> "It is certain, because it is impossible."—ED.

know nothing, my reason hath been more pliable to the will of faith : I am now content to understand a mystery, without a rigid definition, in an easy and Platonic description. That allegorical description of Hermes\* pleaseth me beyond all the metaphysical definitions of divines. Where I cannot satisfy my reason, I love to humour my fancy : I had as lieve you tell me that *anima est angelus hominis, est corpus Dei*,<sup>2</sup> as ἐν-τελέχεια ;<sup>3</sup>—*lux est umbra Dei*,<sup>4</sup> as *actus perspicui*.<sup>5</sup> Where there is an obscurity too deep for our reason, 'tis good to sit down with a description, periphrasis, or adumbration ; for, by acquainting our reason how unable it is to display the visible and obvious effects of nature, it becomes more humble and submissive unto the subtleties of faith : and thus I teach my haggard and unreclaimed reason to stoop unto the lure of faith. I believe there was already a tree, whose fruit our unhappy parents tasted, though, in the same chapter where God forbids it, 'tis positively said, the plants of the field were not yet grown ; for God had not caused it to rain upon the earth. I believe that the serpent (if we shall literally understand it), from his proper form and figure, made his motion on his belly, before the curse. I find the trial of the pucelage and virginity of women, which God ordained the Jews, is very fallible. Experience and history informs me that, not

\* "Sphæra cujus centrum ubique, circumferentia nullibi."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "A globe whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "The soul is the angel of man, the body of God."—ED.

<sup>3</sup> "Actuality."—ED.

<sup>4</sup> "Light is the shadow of God."—ED.

<sup>5</sup> "Transparent impulses." An Aristotelian definition of "light."—ED.

only many particular women, but likewise whole nations, have escaped the curse of childbirth, which God seems to pronounce upon the whole sex ; yet do I believe that all this is true, which, indeed, my reason would persuade me to be false : and this, I think, is no vulgar part of faith, to believe a thing not only above, but contrary to, reason, and against the arguments of our proper senses.

SECT. XI.—In my solitary and retired imagination (*neque enim cum porticus aut me lectulus accepit, desum mihi*)<sup>1</sup> I remember I am not alone ; and therefore forget not to contemplate him and his attributes, who is ever with me, especially those two mighty ones, his wisdom and eternity. With the one I recreate, with the other I confound, my understanding : for who can speak of eternity without a solecism, or think thereof without an ecstasy ? Time we may comprehend ; 'tis but five days older than ourselves, and hath the same horoscope with the world ; but, to retire so far back as to apprehend a beginning,—to give such an infinite start forwards as to conceive an end,—in an essence that we affirm hath neither the one nor the other, it puts my reason to St. Paul's sanctuary : my philosophy dares not say the angels can do it. God hath not made a creature that can comprehend him ; 'tis a privilege of his own nature : "I am that I am" was his own definition unto Moses ; and 'twas a short one to confound mortality, that durst question God, or ask him what he was. Indeed, he only is ; all others have and shall be ; but, in eternity, there is no distinction of tenses ; and therefore that terrible term, predestination,

<sup>1</sup> "For I do not forget myself even when my porch or my couch hath received me."—ED.

which hath troubled so many weak heads to conceive, and the wisest to explain, is in respect to God no prescious determination of our estates to come, but a definite blast of his will already fulfilled, and at the instant that he first decreed it; for, to his eternity, which is indivisible, and altogether, the last trump is already sounded, the reprobates in the flame, and the blessed in Abraham's bosom. St. Peter speaks modestly, when he saith, "a thousand years to God are but as one day;" for, to speak like a philosopher, those continued instances of time, which flow into a thousand years, make not to him one moment. What to us is to come, to his eternity is present; his whole duration being but one permanent point, without succession, parts, flux, or division.

SECT. XII.—There is no attribute that adds more difficulty to the mystery of the Trinity, where, though in a relative way of Father and Son, we must deny a priority. I wonder how Aristotle could conceive the world eternal, or how he could make good two eternities. His similitude, of a triangle comprehended in a square, doth somewhat illustrate the trinity of our souls, and that the triple unity of God; for there is in us not three, but a trinity of, souls; because there is in us, if not three distinct souls, yet differing faculties, that can and do subsist apart in different subjects, and yet in us are thus united as to make but one soul and substance. If one soul were so perfect as to inform three distinct bodies, that were a petty trinity. Conceive the distinct number of three, not divided nor separated by the intellect, but actually comprehended in its unity, and that is a perfect trinity. I have often admired the mystical way of Pythagoras, and the secret



magick of numbers. "Beware of philosophy," is a precept not to be received in too large a sense : for, in this mass of nature, there is a set of things that carry in their front, though not in capital letters, yet in stenography and short characters, something of divinity ; which, to wiser reasons, serve as luminaries in the abyss of knowledge, and, to judicious beliefs, as scales and runcles to mount the pinnacles and highest pieces of divinity. The severe schools shall never laugh me out of the philosophy of Hermes, that this visible world is but a picture of the invisible, wherein, as in a portrait, things are not truly, but in equivocal shapes, and as they counterfeit some real substance in that invisible fabrick.

SECT. XIII.—That other attribute, wherewith I recreate my devotion, is his wisdom, in which I am happy ; and for the contemplation of this only do not repent me that I was bred in the way of study. The advantage I have of the vulgar, with the content and happiness I conceive therein, is an ample recompense for all my endeavours, in what part of knowledge soever. Wisdom is his most beauteous attribute : no man can attain unto it : yet Solomon pleased God when he desired it. He is wise, because he knows all things ; and he knoweth all things, because he made them all : but his greatest knowledge is in comprehending that he made not, that is, himself. And this is also the greatest knowledge in man. For this do I honour my own profession, and embrace the counsel even of the devil himself : had he read such a lecture in Paradise as he did at Delphos,\* we had better known ourselves ; nor had we stood in fear to know him. I know God is

\* Γνωθι σεαυτὸν. Nosce teipsum.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Know thyself."—ED.

wise in all ; wonderful in what we conceive, but far more in what we comprehend not : for we behold him but asquint, upon reflex or shadow ; our understanding is dimmer than Moses's eye ; we are ignorant of the back parts or lower side of his divinity ; therefore, to pry into the maze of his counsels, is not only folly in man, but presumption even in angels. Like us, they are his servants, not his senators ; he holds no counsel, but that mystical one of the Trinity, wherein, though there be three persons, there is but one mind that decrees without contradiction. Nor needs he any ; his actions are not begot with deliberation ; his wisdom naturally knows what's best : his intellect stands ready fraught with the superlative and purest ideas of goodness : consultation and election, which are two motions in us, make but one in him : his actions springing from his power at the first touch of his will. These are contemplations metaphysical : my humble speculations have another method, and are content to trace and discover those expressions he hath left in his creatures, and the obvious effects of nature. There is no danger to profound these mysteries, no *sanctum sanctorum*<sup>1</sup> in philosophy. The world was made to be inhabited by beasts, but studied and contemplated by man : 'tis the debt of our reason we owe unto God, and the homage we pay for not being beasts. Without this, the world is still as though it had not been, or as it was before the sixth day, when as yet there was not a creature that could conceive or say there was a world. The wisdom of God receives small honour from those vulgar heads that rudely stare about, and with a gross rusticity admire his works. Those highly magnify him, whose judicious

<sup>1</sup> "Holy of Holies."—Ed.



enquiry into his acts, and deliberate research into his creatures, return the duty of a devout and learned admiration. Therefore,

Search while thou wilt ; and let thy reason go,  
To ransom truth, e'en to th' abyss below ;  
Rally the scattered causes ; and that line  
Which nature twists be able to untwine.  
It is thy Maker's will ; for unto none  
But unto reason can he e'er be known.  
The devils do know thee ; but those damn'd meteors  
Build not thy glory, but confound thy creatures.  
Teach my endeavours so thy works to read,  
That learning them in thee I may proceed.  
Give thou my reason that instructive flight,  
Whose weary wings may on thy hands still light.  
Teach me to soar aloft, yet ever so,  
When near the sun, to stoop again below.  
Thus shall my humble feathers safely hover,  
And, though near earth, more than the heav'ns discover.  
And then at last, when homeward I shall drive,  
Rich with the spoils of nature, to my hive,  
There will I sit, like that industrious fly,  
Buzzing thy praises ; which shall never die  
Till death abrupts them, and succeeding glory  
Bid me go on in a more lasting story.

And this is almost all wherein an humble creature may endeavour to requite, and some way to retribute unto his Creator : for, if not he that saith, Lord, Lord, but he that doeth the will of the Father, shall be saved, certainly our wills must be our performances, and our intents make out our actions ; otherwise our pious labours shall find anxiety in our graves, and our best endeavours not hope, but fear, a resurrection.

SECT. XIV.—There is but one first cause, and four second causes of all things. Some are without efficient, as God ; others without matter, as angels ;

some without form, as the first matter : but every essence, created or uncreated, hath its final cause, and some positive end both of its essence and operation. This is the cause I grope after in the works of nature ; on this hangs the providence of God. To raise so beauteous a structure as the world and the creatures thereof was but his art ; but their sundry and divided operations, with their predestinated ends, are from the treasury of his wisdom. In the causes, nature, and affections, of the eclipses of the sun and moon, there is most excellent speculation ; but, to profound farther, and to contemplate a reason why his providence hath so disposed and ordered their motions in that vast circle, as to conjoin and obscure each other, is a sweeter piece of reason, and a diviner point of philosophy. Therefore, sometimes, and in some things, there appears to me as much divinity in Galen his books, *De Usu Partium*,<sup>1</sup> as in Suarez's *Metaphysicks*. Had Aristotle been as curious in the enquiry of this cause as he was of the other, he had not left behind him an imperfect piece of philosophy, but an absolute tract of divinity.

SECT. xv.—*Natura nihil agit frustra*,<sup>2</sup> is the only indisputable axiom in philosophy. There are no grotesques in nature ; not any thing framed to fill up empty cantons, and unnecessary spaces. In the most imperfect creatures, and such as were not preserved in the ark, but, having their seeds and principles in the womb of nature, are every where, where the power of the sun is,—in these is the wisdom of his hand discovered. Out of this rank Solomon chose the object

<sup>1</sup> "On the use of the parts."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "Nature doth nothing in vain."—ED.

of his admiration ; indeed, what reason may not go to school to the wisdom of bees, ants, and spiders ? What wise hand teacheth them to do what reason cannot teach us ? Ruder heads stand amazed at those prodigious pieces of nature, whales, elephants, dromedaries, and camels ; these, I confess, are the colossuses and majestick pieces of her hand ; but in these narrow engines there is more curious mathematicks ; and the civility of these little citizens more neatly sets forth the wisdom of their Maker. Who admires not Regio Montanus his fly beyond his eagle ; or wonders not more at the operation of two souls in those little bodies than but one in the trunk of a cedar ? I could never content my contemplation with those general pieces of wonder, the flux and reflux of the sea, the increase of Nile, the conversion of the needle to the north ; and have studied to match and parallel those in the more obvious and neglected pieces of nature which, without farther travel, I can do in the cosmography of myself. We carry with us the wonders we seek without us : there is all Africa and her prodigies in us. We are that bold and adventurous piece of nature, which he that studies wisely learns, in a compendium, what others labour at in a divided piece and endless volume.

SECT. XVI.—Thus there are two books from whence I collect my divinity, Besides that written one of God, another of his servant, nature, that universal and publick manuscript, that lies expanded unto the eyes of all. Those that never saw him in the one have discovered him in the other : this was the scripture and theology of the heathens ; the natural motion of the sun made them more admire him than its supernatural station did the children of Israel. The ordinary

effects of nature wrought more admiration in them than, in the other, all his miracles. Surely the heathens knew better how to join and read these mystical letters than we Christians, who cast a more careless eye on these common hieroglyphics, and disdain to suck divinity from the flowers of nature. Nor do I so forget God as to adore the name of nature ; which I define not, with the schools, to be the principle of motion and rest, but that straight and regular line, that settled and constant course the wisdom of God hath ordained the actions of his creatures, according to their several kinds. To make a revolution every day is the nature of the sun, because of that necessary course which God hath ordained it, from which it cannot swerve but by a faculty from that voice which first did give it motion. Now this course of nature God seldom alters or perverts ; but, like an excellent artist, hath so contrived his work, that, with the self-same instrument, without a new creation, he may effect his obscurest designs. Thus he sweeteneth the water with a wood, preserveth the creatures in the ark, which the blast of his mouth might have as easily created ;—for God is like a skilful geometrician, who, when more easily, and with one stroke of his compass, he might describe or divide a right line, had yet rather do this in a circle or longer way, according to the constituted and forelaid principles of his art : yet this rule of his he doth sometimes pervert, to acquaint the world with his prerogative, lest the arrogancy of our reason should question his power, and conclude he could not. And thus I call the effects of nature the works of God, whose hand and instrument she only is ; and therefore, to ascribe his actions unto her is to devolve the honour

of the principal agent upon the instrument ; which if with reason we may do, then let our hammers rise up and boast they have built our houses, and our pens receive the honour of our writings. I hold there is a general beauty in the works of God, and therefore no deformity in any kind of species or creature whatsoever. I cannot tell by what logick we call a toad, a bear, or an elephant ugly ; they being created in those outward shapes and figures which best express the actions of their inward forms ; and having passed that general visitation of God, who saw that all that he had made was good, that is, conformable to his will, which abhors deformity, and is the rule of order and beauty. There is no deformity but in monstrosity ; wherein, notwithstanding, there is a kind of beauty ; nature so ingeniously contriving the irregular parts, as they become sometimes more remarkable than the principal fabrick. To speak yet more narrowly, there was never any thing ugly or mis-shapen, but the chaos ; wherein, notwithstanding, to speak strictly, there was no deformity, because no form ; nor was it yet impregnate by the voice of God. Now nature is not at variance with art, nor art with nature ; they being both the servants of his providence. Art is the perfection of nature. Were the world now as it was the sixth day, there were yet a chaos. Nature hath made one world, and art another. In brief, all things are artificial ; for nature is the art of God.

SECT. XVII.—This is the ordinary and open way of his providence, which art and industry have in good part discovered ; whose effects we may foretell without an oracle. To foreshow these is not prophecy, but prognostication. There is another way, full of meanders

and labyrinths, whereof the devil and spirits have no exact ephemerides : and that is a more particular and obscure method of his providence ; directing the operation of individual and single essences : this we call fortune ; that serpentine and crooked line, whereby he draws those actions his wisdom intends in a more unknown and secret way ; this cryptic and involved method of his providence have I ever admired ; nor can I relate the history of my life, the occurrences of my days, the escapes, or dangers, and hits of chance, with a *bezo las manos*<sup>1</sup> to Fortune, or a bare gramercy to my good stars. Abraham might have thought the ram in the thicket came thither by accident : human reason would have said, that mere chance conveyed Moses in the ark to the sight of Pharaoh's daughter. What a labyrinth is there in the story of Joseph ! able to convert a stoick. Surely there are in every man's life certain rubs, doublings, and wrenches, which pass a while under the effects of chance ; but at the last, well examined, prove the mere hand of God. 'Twas not dumb chance that, to discover the fougade, or powder plot, contrived a miscarriage in the letter. I like the victory of '88 the better for that one occurrence which our enemies imputed to our dishonour, and the partiality of fortune ; to wit, the tempests and contrariety of winds. King Philip did not detract from the nation, when he said, he sent his armada to fight with men, and not to combat with the winds. Where there is a manifest disproportion between the powers and forces of two several agents, upon a maxim of reason we may promise the victory to the superior : but when unexpected accidents slip in, and unthought-of occurrences

<sup>1</sup> " Kiss the hands."—ED.



intervene, these must proceed from a power that owes no obedience to those axioms ; where, as in the writing upon the wall, we may behold the hand, but see not the spring that moves it. The success of that petty province of Holland (of which the Grand Seignior proudly said, if they should trouble him, as they did the Spaniard, he would send his men with shovels and pickaxes, and throw it into the sea) I cannot altogether ascribe to the ingenuity and industry of the people, but the mercy of God, that hath disposed them to such a thriving genius ; and to the will of his providence, that dispenseth his favour to each country in their preordinate season. All cannot be happy at once ; for, because the glory of one state depends upon the ruin of another, there is a revolution and vicissitude of their greatness, and must obey the swing of that wheel, not moved by intelligences, but by the hand of God, whereby all estates rise to their zenith and vertical points, according to their predestinated periods. For the lives not only of men, but of commonwealths and the whole world, run not upon a helix that still enlargeth ; but on a circle, where, arriving to their meridian, they decline in obscurity, and fall under the horizon again.

SECT. XVIII.—These must not therefore be named the effects of fortune but in a relative way, and as we term the works of nature. It was the ignorance of man's reason that begat this very name, and by a careless term miscalled the providence of God : for there is no liberty for causes to operate in a loose and straggling way ; nor any effect whatsoever but hath its warrant from some universal or superior cause. 'Tis not a ridiculous devotion to say a prayer before a game at tables ; for, even in sortileges and matters of greatest

uncertainty, there is a settled and preordered course of effects. It is we that are blind, not fortune. Because our eye is too dim to discover the mystery of her effects, we foolishly paint her blind, and hoodwink the providence of the Almighty. I cannot justify that contemptible proverb, that "fools only are fortunate ;" or that insolent paradox, that "a wise man is out of the reach of fortune ;" much less those opprobrious epithets of poets,—whore, bawd, and strumpet. 'Tis, I confess, the common fate of men of singular gifts of mind, to be destitute of those of fortune ; which doth not any way deject the spirit of wiser judgments who thoroughly understand the justice of this proceeding ; and, being enriched with higher donatives, cast a more careless eye on these vulgar parts of felicity. It is a most unjust ambition, to desire to engross the mercies of the Almighty, not to be content with the goods of mind, without a possession of those of body or fortune : and it is an error, worse than heresy, to adore these complimentary and circumstantial pieces of felicity, and undervalue those perfections and essential points of happiness, wherein we resemble our Maker. To wiser desires it is satisfaction enough to deserve, though not to enjoy, the favours of fortune. Let providence provide for fools : 'tis not partiality, but equity, in God, who deals with us but as our natural parents. Those that are able of body and mind he leaves to their deserts ; to those of weaker merits he imparts a larger portion ; and pieces out the defect of one by the excess of the other. Thus have we no just quarrel with nature for leaving us naked ; or to envy the horns, hoofs, skins, and furs of other creatures ; being provided with reason, that can supply them all. We need



not labour, with so many arguments, to confute judicial astrology ; for, if there be a truth therein, it doth not injure divinity. If to be born under Mercury disposeth us to be witty ; under Jupiter to be wealthy ; I do not owe a knee unto these, but unto that merciful hand that hath ordered my indifferent and uncertain nativity into such benevolous aspects. Those that hold, that all things are governed by fortune, had not erred, had they not persisted there. The Romans, that erected a temple to Fortune, acknowledged therein, though in a blinder way, somewhat of divinity ; for, in a wise supputation, all things begin and end in the Almighty. There is a nearer way to heaven than Homer's chain ; an easy logick may conjoin a heaven and earth in one argument, and, with less than a sorites, resolve all things to God. For though we christen effects by their most sensible and nearest causes, yet is God the true and infallible cause of all ; whose concurrence, though it be general, yet doth it subdivide itself into the particular actions of every thing, and is that spirit, by which each singular essence not only subsists, but performs its operation.

SECT. XIX. The bad construction and perverse comment on these pair of second causes, or visible hands of God, have perverted the devotion of many unto atheism ; who, forgetting the honest advisees of faith, have listened unto the conspiracy of passion and reason. I have therefore always endeavoured to compose those feuds and angry dissensions between affection, faith, and reason : for there is in our soul a kind of triumvirate, or triple government of three competitors, which distracts the peace of this our commonwealth not less than did that other the state of Rome.

As reason is a rebel unto faith, so passion unto reason. As the propositions of faith seem absurd unto reason, so the theorems of reason unto passion and both unto reason; yet a moderate and peaceable discretion may so state and order the matter, that they may be all kings, and yet make but one monarchy: every one exercising his sovereignty and prerogative in a due time and place, according to the restraint and limit of circumstance. There are, as in philosophy, so in divinity, sturdy doubts, and boisterous objections, wherewith the unhappiness of our knowledge too nearly acquainteth us. More of these no man hath known than myself; which I confess I conquered, not in a martial posture but on my knees. For our endeavours are not only to combat with doubts, but always to dispute with the devil. The villany of that spirit takes a hint of infidelity from our studies; and, by demonstrating a neutrality in one way, makes us mistrust a miracle in another. Thus, having perused the Archidoxes, and read the secret sympathies of things, he would dissuade my belief from the miracle of the brazen serpent; make me conceit that image worked by sympathy, and was but an Egyptian trick, to cure their diseases without a miracle. Again, having seen some experiments of bitumen, and having read far more of naphtha, he whispered to my curiosity the fire of the altar might be natural, and bade me mistrust a miracle in Elias, when he intrenched the altar round with water: for that inflammable substance yields not easily unto water, but flames in the arms of its antagonist. And thus would he inveigle my belief to think the combustion of Sodom might be natural, and that there was an asphaltick and bituminous nature in that lake before

the fire of Gomorrah. I know that manna is now plentifully gathered in Calabria; and Josephus tells me, in his days it was as plentiful in Arabia. The devil therefore made the query, "where was then the miracle in the days of Moses?" The Israelites saw but that, in his time, which the natives of those countries behold in ours. Thus the devil played at chess with me, and, yielding a pawn, thought to gain a queen of me; taking advantage of my honest endeavours; and, whilst I laboured to raise the structure of my reason, he strove to undermine the edifice of my faith.

SECT. XX.—Neither had these or any other ever such advantage of me, as to incline me to any point of infidelity or desperate positions of atheism; for I have been these many years of opinion there was never any. Those that held religion was the difference of man from beasts, have spoken probably, and proceed upon a principle as inductive as the other. That doctrine of Epicurus, that denied the providence of God, was no atheism, but a magnificent and high-strained conceit of his majesty which he deemed too sublime to mind the trivial actions of those inferior creatures. That fatal necessity of the stoicks is nothing but the immutable law of his will. Those that heretofore denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost have been condemned but as hereticks; and those that now deny our Saviour, though more than hereticks, are not so much as atheists: for, though they deny two persons in the Trinity, they hold, as we do, there is but one God.

That villain and secretary of hell, that composed that miscreant piece of the three impostors, though divided from all religions, and neither Jew, Turk, nor

Christian, was not a positive atheist. I confess every country hath its Machiavel, every age its Lucian, whereof common heads must not hear, nor more advanced judgments too rashly venture on. It is the rhetorick of Satan ; and may pervert a loose or prejudicate belief.

SECT. XXI.—I confess I have perused them all, and can discover nothing that may startle a discreet belief ; yet are their heads carried off with the wind and breath of such motives. I remember a doctor in physick, of Italy, who could not perfectly believe the immortality of the soul, because Galen seemed to make a doubt thereof. With another I was familiarly acquainted, in France, a divine, and a man of singular parts, that on the same point was so plunged and gravelled with three lines of Seneca, that all our antidotes, drawn from both Scripture and philosophy, could not expel the poison of his error. There are a set of heads that can credit the relations of mariners, yet question the testimonies of Saint Paul : and peremptorily maintain the traditions of Ælian or Pliny ; yet, in histories of Scripture, raise queries and objections : believing no more than they can parallel in humane authors. I confess there are, in Scripture, stories that do exceed the fables of poets, and, to a captious reader, sound like Garagantua or Bevis. Search all the legends of times past, and the fabulous conceits of these present, and 'twill be hard to find one that deserves to carry the buckler unto Sampson ; yet is all this of an easy possibility, if we conceive a divine concurrence, or an influence but from the little finger of the Almighty. It is impossible that, either in the discourse of man or in the infallible voice of God, to the weakness of our apprehensions there

should not appear irregularities, contradictions, and antinomies : myself could show a catalogue of doubts, never yet imagined nor questioned, as I know, which are not resolved at the first hearing ; not fantastick queries or objections of air ; for I cannot hear of atoms in divinity. I can read the history of the pigeon that was sent out of the ark, and returned no more, yet not question how she found out her mate that was left behind : that Lazarus was raised from the dead, yet not demand where, in the interim, his soul awaited ; or raise a law-case, whether his heir might lawfully detain his inheritance bequeathed unto him by his death, and he, though restored to life, have no plea or title unto his former possessions. Whether Eve was framed out of the left side of Adam, I dispute not ; because I stand not yet assured which is the right side of a man ; or whether there be any such distinction in nature. That she was edified out of the rib of Adam, I believe ; yet raise no question who shall arise with that rib at the resurrection. Whether Adam was an hermaphrodite, as the rabbins contend upon the letter of the text ; because it is contrary to reason, there should be an hermaphrodite before there was a woman, or a composition of two natures, before there was a second composed. Likewise, whether the world was created in autumn, summer, or the spring ; because it was created in them all : for, whatsoever sign the sun possesseth, those four seasons are actually existent. It is the nature of this luminary to distinguish the several seasons of the year ; all which it makes at one time in the whole earth, and successive in any part thereof. There are a bundle of curiosities, not only in philosophy, but in divinity, proposed and discussed by men of most supposed abilities,

which indeed are not worthy our vacant hours, much less our serious studies. Pieces only fit to be placed in Pantagruel's library, or bound up with Tartaretus, *De Modo Cacandi*.

SECT. XXII.—These are niceties that become not those that peruse so serious a mystery. There are others more generally questioned, and called to the bar, yet, methinks, of an easy and possible truth.

'Tis ridiculous to put off or drown the general flood of Noah, in that particular inundation of Deucalion. That there was a deluge once seems not to me so great a miracle as that there is not one always. How all the kinds of creatures, not only in their own bulks, but with a competency of food and sustenance, might be preserved in one ark, and within the extent of three hundred cubits, to a reason that rightly examines it, will appear very feasible. There is another secret, not contained in the Scripture, which is more hard to comprehend, and put the honest Father to the refuge of a miracle; and that is, not only how the distinct pieces of the world, and divided islands, should be first planted by men, but inhabited by tigers, panthers, and bears. How America abounded with beasts of prey, and noxious animals, yet contained not in it that necessary creature, a horse, is very strange. By what passage those, not only birds, but dangerous and unwelcome beasts, came over. How there be creatures there, which are not found in this triple continent. All which must needs be strange unto us, that hold but one ark; and that the creatures began their progress from the mountains of Ararat. They who, to salve this, would make the deluge particular, proceed upon a principle that I can no way grant; not only upon the negative of



Holy Scriptures, but of mine own reason, whereby I can make it probable that the world was as well peopled in the time of Noah as in ours ; and fifteen hundred years, to people the world, as full a time for them as four thousand years since have been to us. There are other assertions and common tenets drawn from Scripture, and generally believed as Scripture, whereunto, notwithstanding, I would never betray the liberty of my reason. 'Tis a postulate to me, that Methusalem was the longest lived of all the children of Adam ; and no man will be able to prove it ; when, from the process of the text, I can manifest it may be otherwise. That Judas perished by hanging himself, there is no certainty in Scripture : though, in one place, it seems to affirm it, and, by a doubtful word, hath given occasion to translate it ; yet, in another place, in a more punctual description, it makes it improbable, and seems to overthrow it. That our fathers, after the flood, erected the tower of Babel, to preserve themselves against a second deluge, is generally opinioned and believed ; yet is there another intention of theirs expressed in Scripture. Besides, it is improbable, from the circumstance of the place ; that is, a plain in the land of Shinar. These are no points of faith ; and therefore may admit a free dispute. There are yet others, and those familiarly concluded from the text, wherein (under favour) I see no consequence. The church of Rome confidently proves the opinion of tutelary angels, from that answer, when Peter knocked at the door, 'Tis not he, but his angel ; that is, might some say, his messenger, or somebody from him ; for so the original signifies ; and is as likely to be the doubtful family's meaning. This exposition I once

suggested to a young divine, that answered upon this point ; to which I remember the Franciscan opponent replied no more, but, that it was a new, and no authentick interpretation.

SECT. XXIII.—These are but the conclusions and fallible discourses of man upon the word of God ; for such I do believe the Holy Scriptures ; yet, were it of man, I could not choose but say, it was the most singular and superlative piece that hath been extant since the creation. Were I a pagan, I should not refrain the lecture of it ; and cannot but commend the judgment of Ptolemy, that thought not his library complete without it. The Alcoran of the Turks (I speak without prejudice) is an ill-composed piece, containing in it vain and ridiculous errors in philosophy, impossibilities, fictions, and vanities beyond laughter, maintained by evident and open sophisms, the policy of ignorance, deposition of universities, and banishment of learning. This hath gotten foot by arms and violence : that, without a blow, hath disseminated itself through the whole earth. It is not unremarkable, what Philo first observed, that the law of Moses continued two thousand years without the least alteration ; whereas, we see, the laws of other commonwealths do alter with occasions : and even those, that pretended their original from some divinity, to have vanished without trace or memory. I believe, besides Zoroaster, there were divers others that writ before Moses ; who, notwithstanding, have suffered the common fate of time. Men's works have an age, like themselves ; and though they outlive their authors, yet have they a stint and period to their duration. This only is a work too hard for the teeth of time, and cannot perish but in



the general flames, when all things shall confess their ashes.

SECT. XXIV.—I have heard some with deep sighs lament the lost lines of Cicero ; others with as many groans deplore the combustion of the library of Alexandria : for my own part, I think there be too many in the world ; and could with patience behold the urn and ashes of the Vatican, could I, with a few others, recover the perished leaves of Solomon. I would not omit a copy of Enoch's pillars, had they many nearer authors than Josephus, or did not relish somewhat of the fable. Some men have written more than others have spoken. Pineda quotes more authors, in one work,\* than are necessary in a whole world. Of those three great inventions† in Germany, there are two which are not without their incommodities. 'Tis not a melancholy *utinam*<sup>1</sup> of my own, but the desires of better heads, that there were a general synod—not to unite the incompatible difference of religion, but,—for the benefit of learning, to reduce it, as it lay at first, in a few and solid authors ; and to condemn to the fire those swarms and millions of rhapsodies, begotten only to distract and abuse the weaker judgments of scholars, and to maintain the trade and mystery of typographers.

SECT. XXV.—I cannot but wonder with what exception the Samaritans could confine their belief to the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses. I am ashamed at the rabbinical interpretation of the Jews upon the Old

\* Pineda, in his *Monarchia Ecclesiastica*, quotes one thousand and forty authors.

† Guns ; printing ; the mariner's compass.—*MS. W.*

<sup>1</sup> "Would that—— !" An expression of desire.—*ED.*

Testament, as much as their defection from the New : and truly it is beyond wonder, how that contemptible and degenerate issue of Jacob, once so devoted to ethnick superstition, and so easily seduced to the idolatry of their neighbours, should now, in such an obstinate and peremptory belief, adhere unto their own doctrine, expect impossibilities, and in the face and eye of the church, persist without the least hope of conversion. This is a vice in them, that were a virtue in us : for obstinacy in a bad cause is but constancy in a good : and herein I must accuse those of my own religion ; for there is not any of such a fugitive faith, such an unstable belief, as a Christian ; none that do so often transform themselves, not unto several shapes of Christianity, and of the same species, but unto more unnatural and contrary forms of Jew and Mahometan ; that, from the name of Saviour, can descend to the bare term of prophet : and, from an old belief that he is come, fall to a new expectation of his coming. It is the promise of Christ, to make us all one flock : but how and when this union shall be, is as obscure to me as the last day. Of those four members of religion we hold a slender proportion. There are, I confess, some new additions ; yet small to those which accrue to our adversaries ; and those only drawn from the revolt of pagans ; men but of negative impieties ; and such as deny Christ, but because they never heard of him. But the religion of the Jew is expressly against the Christian, and the Mahometan against both ; for the Turk, in the bulk he now stands, is beyond all hope of conversion : if he fall asunder, there may be conceived hopes ; but not without strong improbabilities. The Jew is obstinate in all fortunes ; the persecution of fifteen hundred

years hath but confirmed them in their error. They have already endured whatsoever may be inflicted: and have suffered, in a bad cause, even to the condemnation of their enemies. Persecution is a bad and indirect way to plant religion. It hath been the unhappy method of angry devotions, not only to confirm honest religion, but wicked heresies and extravagant opinions. It was the first stone and basis of our faith. None can more justly boast of persecutions, and glory in the number and valour of martyrs. For, to speak properly, those are true and almost only examples of fortitude. Those that are fetched from the field, or drawn from the actions of the camp, are not oftentimes so truly precedents of valour as audacity, and, at the best, attain but to some bastard piece of fortitude. If we shall strictly examine the circumstances and requisites which Aristotle requires to true and perfect valour, we shall find the name only in his master, Alexander, and as little in that Roman worthy, Julius Cæsar; and if any, in that easy and active way, have done so nobly as to deserve that name, yet, in the passive and more terrible piece, these have surpassed, and in a more heroical way may claim, the honour of that title. 'Tis not in the power of every honest faith to proceed thus far, or pass to heaven through the flames. Every one hath it not in that full measure, nor in so audacious and resolute a temper, as to endure those terrible tests and trials; who, notwithstanding, in a peaceable way, do truly adore their Saviour, and have, no doubt, a faith acceptable in the eyes of God.

SECT. xxvi.—Now, as all that die in the war are not termed soldiers, so neither can I properly term all those that suffer in matters of religion, martyrs. The

council of Constance condemns John Huss for a heretick; the stories of his own party style him a martyr. He must needs offend the divinity of both, that says he was neither the one nor the other. There are many (questionless) canonized on earth, that shall never be saints in heaven; and have their names in histories and martyrologies, who, in the eyes of God, are not so perfect martyrs as was that wise heathen Socrates, that suffered on a fundamental point of religion,—the unity of God. I have often pitied the miserable bishop\* that suffered in the cause of antipodes; yet cannot choose but accuse him of as much madness, for exposing his living on such a trifle, as those of ignorance and folly, that condemned him. I think my conscience will not give me the lie, if I say there are not many extant, that, in a noble way, fear the face of death less than myself; yet, from the moral duty I owe to the commandment of God, and the natural respect that I tender unto the conservation of my essence and being, I would not perish upon a ceremony, politick point, or indifferency: nor is my belief of that untractable temper as, not to bow at their obstacles, or connive at matters wherein there are not manifest impieties. The leaven, therefore, and ferment of all, not only civil, but religious, actions, is wisdom; without which, to commit ourselves to the flames is homicide, and (I fear) but to pass through one fire into another.

SECT. XXVII.—That miracles are ceased, I can neither prove nor absolutely deny, much less define the time and period of their cessation. That they survived Christ is manifest upon record of Scripture: that they outlived the apostles also, and were revived at the con-

\* Virgilius.—*MS. W.*

version of nations, many years after, we cannot deny, if we shall not question those writers whose testimonies we do not controvert in points that make for our own opinions : therefore, that may have some truth in it, that is reported by the Jesuits of their miracles in the Indies. I could wish it were true, or had any other testimony than their own pens. They may easily believe those miracles abroad, who daily conceive a greater at home—the transmutation of those visible elements into the body and blood of our Saviour ;—for the conversion of water into wine, which he wrought in Cana, or, what the devil would have had him do in the wilderness, of stones into bread, compared to this, will scarce deserve the name of a miracle: though, indeed, to speak properly, there is not one miracle greater than another ; they being the extraordinary effects of the hand of God, to which all things are of an equal facility ; and to create the world as easy as one single creature. For this is also a miracle ; not only to produce effects against or above nature, but before nature ; and to create nature, as great a miracle as to contradict or transcend her. We do too narrowly define the power of God, restraining it to our capacities. I hold that God can do all things : how he should work contradictions, I do not understand, yet dare not, therefore, deny. I cannot see why the angel of God should question Esdras to recall the time past, if it were beyond his own power ; or that God should pose mortality in that which he was not able to perform himself. I will not say that God cannot, but he will not, perform many things, which we plainly affirm he cannot. This, I am sure, is the mannerliest proposition ; wherein, notwithstanding, I hold no paradox :

for, strictly, his power is the same with his will ; and they both, with all the rest, do make but one God.

SECT. XXVIII.—Therefore, that miracles have been, I do believe ; that they may yet be wrought by the living, I do not deny : but have no confidence in those which are fathered on the dead. And this hath ever made me suspect the efficacy of relicks, to examine the bones, question the habits and appurtenances of saints, and even of Christ himself. I cannot conceive why the cross that Helena found, and whereon Christ himself died, should have power to restore others unto life. I excuse not Constantine from a fall off his horse, or a mischief from his enemies, upon the wearing those nails on his bridle which our Saviour bore upon the cross in his hands. I compute among your *piæ fraudes*,<sup>1</sup> nor many degrees before consecrated swords and roses, that which Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, returned the Genoese for their costs and pains in his wars ; to wit ; the ashes of John the Baptist. Those that hold, the sanctity of their souls doth leave behind a tincture and sacred faculty on their bodies, speak naturally of miracles, and do not salve the doubt. Now, one reason I tender so little devotion unto relicks is, I think the slender and doubtful respect I have always held unto antiquities. For that, indeed, which I admire, is far before antiquity ; that is, Eternity ; and that is, God himself ; who, though he be styled the Ancient of Days, cannot receive the adjunct of antiquity, who was before the world, and shall be after it, yet is not older than it ; for, in his years there is no climacter : his duration is eternity : and far more venerable than antiquity.

<sup>1</sup> “ Pious frauds.”—ED.



SECT. XXIX.—But, above all things, I wonder how the curiosity of the wiser heads could pass that great and indisputable miracle, the cessation of oracles ; and in what swoon their reasons lay, to content themselves, and sit down with such a far-fetched and ridiculous reason as Plutarch allegeth for it. The Jews, that can believe the supernatural solstice of the sun in the days of Joshua, have yet the impudence to deny the eclipse, which every pagan confessed, at his death ; but for this, it is evident beyond all contradiction : the devil himself confessed it.\* Certainly it is not a warrantable curiosity, to examine the verity of Scripture by the concordance of human history ; or seek to confirm the chronicle of Hester or Daniel by the authority of Megasthenes or Herodotus. I confess, I have had an unhappy curiosity this way, till I laughed myself out of it with a piece of Justin, where he delivers that the children of Israel, for being scabbed, were banished out of Egypt. And truly, since I have understood the occurrences of the world, and know in what counterfeiting shapes and deceitful visards times present represent on the stage things past, I do believe them little more than things to come. Some have been of my own opinion, and endeavoured to write the history of their own lives ; wherein Moses hath outgone them all, and left not only the story of his life, but, as some will have it, of his death also.

SECT. XXX.—It is a riddle to me, how this story of oracles hath not wormed out of the world that doubtful conceit of spirits and witches ; how so many learned heads should so far forget their metaphysicks, and destroy the ladder and scale of creatures, as to question

\* In his oracle to Augustus.

the existence of spirits ; for my part, I have ever believed, and do now know, that there are witches. They that doubt of these do not only deny them, but spirits : and are obliquely, and upon consequence, a sort, not of infidels, but atheists. Those that, to confute their incredulity, desire to see apparitions, shall, questionless, never behold any, nor have the power to be so much as witches. The devil hath made them already in a heresy as capital as witchcraft ; and to appear to them were but to convert them. Of all the delusions wherewith he deceives mortality, there is not any that puzzleth me more than the legerdmain of changelings. I do not credit those transformations of reasonable creatures into beasts, or that the devil hath a power to transpeciate a man into a horse, who tempted Christ (as a trial of his divinity) to convert but stones into bread. I could believe that spirits use with man the act of carnality ; and that in both sexes. I conceive they may assume, steal, or contrive a body, wherein there may be action enough to content decrepit lust, or passion to satisfy more active veneries ; yet, in both, without a possibility of generation : and therefore that opinion, that Antichrist should be born of the tribe of Dan, by conjunction with the devil, is ridiculous, and a conceit fitter for a rabbin than a Christian. I hold that the devil doth really possess some men ; the spirit of melancholy others ; the spirit of delusion others : that, as the devil is concealed and denied by some, so God and good angels are pretended by others, whereof the late defection of the maid of Germany\* hath left a pregnant example.

\* That lived, without meat, on the smell of a rose.

—MS. W.



SECT. XXXI.—Again, I believe that all that use sorceries, incantations, and spells, are not witches, or, as we term them, magicians. I conceive there is a traditional magick, not learned immediately from the devil, but at second hand from his scholars, who, having once the secret betrayed, are able and do empirically practise without his advice ; they both proceeding upon the principles of nature ; where actives, aptly conjoined to disposed passives, will, under any master, produce their effects. Thus, I think, at first, a great part of philosophy was witchcraft ; which, being afterward derived to one another, proved but philosophy, and was indeed no more than the honest effects of nature :—what invented by us, is philosophy ; learned from him, is magick. We do surely owe the discovery of many secrets to the discovery of good and bad angels. I could never pass that sentence of Paracelsus without an asterisk or annotation : *ascendens*\*<sup>1</sup> *constellatum multa revelat quærentibus magnalia naturæ*, i.e. *opera Dei*. I do think that many mysteries ascribed to our own inventions have been the courteous revelations of spirits ; for those noble essences in heaven bear a friendly regard unto their fellow-natures on earth ; and therefore believe that those many prodigies and ominous prognosticks, which forerun the ruin of states, princes, and private persons, are the charitable premonitions of good angels, which more careless inquiries term but the effects of chance and nature.

SECT. XXXII.—Now, besides these particular and

\* Thereby is meant our good angel, appointed us from our nativity.

<sup>1</sup> “Ascending the heavens reveals many things to those who seek the great things of nature : i.e. the works of God.”—ED.

divided spirits, there may be (for aught I know) a universal and common spirit to the whole world. It was the opinion of Plato, and it is yet of the hermetical philosophers. If there be a common nature, that unites and ties the scattered and divided individuals into one species, why may there not be one that unites them all? However, I am sure there is a common spirit, that plays within us, yet makes no part of us; and that is, the spirit of God; the fire and scintillation of that noble and mighty essence, which is the life and radical heat of spirits, and those essences that know not the virtue of the sun; a fire quite contrary to the fire of hell. This is that gentle heat that brooded on the waters,\* and in six days hatched the world; this is that irradiation that dispels the mists of hell, the clouds of horror, fear, sorrow, despair; and preserves the region of the mind in serenity. Whosoever feels not the warm gale and gentle ventilation of this spirit, (though I feel his pulse) I dare not say he lives; for truly without this, to me, there is no heat under the tropick; nor any light, though I dwelt in the body of the sun.

As when the labouring sun hath wrought his track  
Up to the top of lofty Cancer's back,  
The icy ocean cracks, the frozen pole  
Thaws with the heat of the celestial coal;  
So when thy absent beams begin t' impart  
Again a solstice on my frozen heart,  
My winter 's o'er, my drooping spirits sing,  
And every part revives into a spring.  
But if thy quickening beams awhile decline,  
And with their light bless not this orb of mine,

\* Spiritus Domini incubabat aquis. *Gen. i.*—*MS. W.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The Spirit of God brooded on the waters."—*ED.*

A chilly frost surpriseth every member,  
And in the midst of June I feel December.  
Oh how this earthly temper doth debase  
The noble soul in this her humble place !  
Whose wingy nature ever doth aspire  
To reach that place whence first it took its fire.  
These flames I feel, which in my heart do dwell,  
Are not thy beams, but take their fire from hell.  
O quench them all ! and let thy Light divine  
Be as the sun to this poor orb of mine !  
And to thy sacred Spirit convert those fires,  
Whose earthly fumes choke my devout aspires !

SECT. XXXIII.—Therefore, for spirits, I am so far from denying their existence, that I could easily believe, that not only whole countries, but particular persons, have their tutelary and guardian angels. It is not a new opinion of the Church of Rome, but an old one of Pythagoras and Plato : there is no heresy in it : and if not manifestly defined in Scripture, yet it is an opinion of a good and wholesome use in the course and actions of a man's life ; and would serve as an hypothesis to salve many doubts, whereof common philosophy affordeth no solution. Now, if you demand my opinion and metaphysicks of their natures, I confess them very shallow ; most of them in a negative way, like that of God ; or in a comparative, between ourselves and fellow-creatures : for there is in this universe a stair, or manifest scale, of creatures, rising not disorderly, or in confusion, but with a comely method and proportion. Between creatures of mere existence and things of life there is a large disproportion of nature : between plants and animals, or creatures of sense, a wider difference : between them and man, a far greater : and if the proportion hold on, between man and angels there should be yet a greater. We do not com-

prehend their natures, who retain the first definition of Porphyry ;\* and distinguish them from ourselves by immortality : for, before his fall, man also was immortal : yet must we needs affirm that he had a different essence from the angels. Having, therefore, no certain knowledge of their nature, 'tis no bad method of the schools, whatsoever perfection we find obscurely in ourselves, in a more complete and absolute way to ascribe unto them. I believe they have an extemporary knowledge, and upon the first motion of their reason, do what we cannot without study or deliberation : that they know things by their forms, and define, by specific difference, what we describe by accidents and properties : and therefore probabilities to us may be demonstrations unto them : that they have knowledge not only of the specific, but numerical, forms of individuals, and understand by what reserved difference each single hypostatis (besides the relation to its species) becomes its numerical self : that, as the soul hath a power to move the body it informs, so there's a faculty to move any, though inform none : ours upon restraint of time, place, and distance : but that invisible hand that conveyed Habakkuk to the lion's den, or Philip to Azotus, infringeth this rule, and hath a secret conveyance, wherewith mortality is not acquainted. If they have that intuitive knowledge, whereby, as in reflection, they behold the thoughts of one another, I cannot peremptorily deny but they know a great part of ours. They that, to refute the invocation of saints, have denied that they have any knowledge of our affairs below, have proceeded too far, and must pardon my

\* *Essentiæ rationalis immortalis.*—*MS. W.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Of rational immortal essence."—*ED.*

opinion, till I can thoroughly answer that piece of Scripture, "At the conversion of a sinner, the angels in heaven rejoice." I cannot, with those in that great father, securely interpret the work of the first day, *fat lux*,<sup>1</sup> to the creation of angels; though I confess there is not any creature that hath so near a glimpse of their nature as light in the sun and elements : we style it a bare accident ; but, where it subsists alone, 'tis a spiritual substance, and may be an angel : in brief, conceive light invisible, and that is a spirit.

SECT. XXXIV.—These are certainly the magisterial and masterpieces of the Creator ; the flower, or, as we may say, the best part of nothing ; actually existing, what we are but in hopes, and probability. We are only that amphibious piece, between a corporeal and a spiritual essence ; that middle form, that links those two together, and makes good the method of God and nature, that jumps not from extremes, but unites the incompatible distances by some middle and participating natures. That we are the breath and similitude of God, it is indisputable, and upon record of Holy Scripture : but to call ourselves a microcosm, or little world, I thought it only a pleasant trope of rhetorick, till my near judgment and second thoughts told me there was a real truth therein. For, first we are a rude mass, and in the rank of creatures which only are, and have a dull kind of being, not yet privileged with life, or preferred to sense or reason ; next we live the life of plants, the life of animals, the life of men, and at last the life of spirits : running on, in one mysterious nature, those five kinds of existences, which comprehend the creatures, not only of the world, but of the

<sup>1</sup> "Let there be light."—ED.

universe. Thus is man that great and true *amphibium*,<sup>1</sup> whose nature is disposed to live, not only like other creatures in divers elements, but in divided and distinguished worlds ; for though there be but one [world] to sense, there are two to reason, the one visible, the other invisible ; whereof Moses seems to have left description, and of the other so obscurely, that some parts thereof are yet in controversy. And truly, for the first chapters of Genesis, I must confess a great deal of obscurity ; though divines have, to the power of human reason, endeavoured to make all go in a literal meaning, yet those allegorical interpretations are also probable, and perhaps the mystical method of Moses, bred up in the hieroglyphical schools of the Egyptians.

SECT. XXXV.—Now for that immaterial world, methinks we need not wander so far as the first moveable ; for, even in this material fabrick, the spirits walk as freely exempt from the affection of time, place, and motion, as beyond the extremest circumference. Do but extract from the corpulency of bodies, or resolve things beyond their first matter, and you discover the habitation of angels ; which if I call the ubiquitary and omnipresent essence of God, I hope I shall not offend divinity : for, before the creation of the world, God was really all things. For the angels he created no new world, or determinate mansion, and therefore they are everywhere where is his essence, and do live, at a distance even, in himself. That God made all things for man, is in some sense true ; yet, not so far as to subordinate the creation of those purer creatures unto ours ; though, as ministering spirits, they do, and are willing to fulfill the will of God in these lower and

<sup>1</sup> “Living in two elements.”—ED.



sublunary affairs of man. God made all things for himself; and it is impossible he should make them for any other end than his own glory: it is all he can receive, and all that is without himself. For, honour being an external adjunct, and in the honourer rather than in the person honoured, it was necessary to make a creature, from whom he might receive this homage: and that is, in the other world, angels, in this, man; which when we neglect, we forget the very end of our creation, and may justly provoke God, not only to repent that he hath made the world, but that he hath sworn he would not destroy it. That there is but one world, is a conclusion of faith; Aristotle with all his philosophy hath not been able to prove it: and as weakly that the world was eternal; that dispute much troubled the pen of the ancient philosophers, but Moses decided that question, and all is salved with the new term of a creation,—that is, a production of something out of nothing. And what is that?—whatsoever is opposite to something; or, more exactly, that which is truly contrary unto God: for he only is; all others have an existence with dependency, and are something but by a distinction. And herein is divinity conformant unto philosophy, and not only generation founded on contrarieties, but also creation. God, being all things, is contrary unto nothing; out of which were made all things, and so nothing became something, and omneity informed nullity into an essence.

SECT. XXXVI.—The whole creation is a mystery, and particularly that of man. At the blast of his mouth were the rest of the creatures made; and at his bare word they started out of nothing: but in the frame of man (as the text describes it) he played the sensible



operator, and seemed not so much to create as make him. When he had separated the materials of other creatures, there consequently resulted a form and soul ; but, having raised the walls of man, he was driven to a second and harder creation,—of a substance like himself, an incorruptible and immortal soul. For these two affections we have the philosophy and opinion of the heathens, the flat affirmative of Plato, and not a negative from Aristotle. There is another scruple cast in by divinity concerning its production, much disputed in the German auditories, and with that indifference and equality of arguments, as leave the controversy undetermined. I am not of Paracelsus's mind, that boldly delivers a receipt to make a man without conjunction ; yet cannot but wonder at the multitude of heads that do deny traduction, having no other argument to confirm their belief than that rhetorical sentence and *antimetathesis*\* of Augustine, *creando infunditur, infundendo creatur*.<sup>1</sup> Either opinion will consist well enough with religion : yet I should rather incline to this, did not one objection haunt me, not wrung from speculations and subtleties, but from common sense and observation ; not pick'd from the leaves of any author, but bred amongst the weeds and tares of my own brain. And this is a conclusion from the equivocal and monstrous productions in the copulation of a man with a beast : for if the soul of man be not transmitted and transfused in the seed of the parents, why are not those productions merely beasts, but have also an impression and tincture of reason in as

\* *Antanaclassi*:—A figure in rhetoric, where one word is inserted upon another.—*MS. W.*

<sup>1</sup> “By creating is imparted, and by imparting is created.”—*ED.*

high a measure, as it can evidence itself in those improper organs? Nor, truly, can I peremptorily deny that the soul, in this her sublunary estate, is wholly, and in all acceptations, inorganic: but that, for the performance of her ordinary actions, is required not only a symmetry and proper disposition of organs, but a crasis and temper correspondent to its operations; yet is not this mass of flesh and visible structure the instrument and proper corpse of the soul, but rather of sense, and that the hand of reason. In our study of anatomy there is a mass of mysterious philosophy, and such as reduced the very heathens to divinity; yet, amongst all those rare discoveries and curious pieces I find in the fabrick of man, I do not so much content myself, as in that I find not,—that is, no organ or instrument for the rational soul; for in the brain, which we term the seat of reason, there is not anything of moment more than I can discover in the crany of a beast: and this is a sensible and no inconsiderable argument of the inorganicity of the soul, at least in that sense we usually so receive it. Thus we are men, and we know not how; there is something in us that can be without us, and will be after us, though it is strange that it hath no history what it was before us, nor cannot tell how it entered in us.

SECT. XXXVII.—Now, for these walls of flesh, wherein the soul doth seem to be immured before the resurrection, it is nothing but an elemental composition, and a fabrick that must fall to ashes. “All flesh is grass,” is not only metaphorically, but literally, true; for all those creatures we behold are but the herbs of the field, digested into flesh in them, or more remotely carnified in ourselves. Nay, further, we are what we

all abhor, *anthropophagi*,<sup>1</sup> and cannibals, devourers not only of men, but of ourselves; and that not in an allegory but a positive truth: for all this mass of flesh which we behold, came in at our mouths: this frame we look upon, hath been upon our trenchers; in brief, we have devoured ourselves. I cannot believe the wisdom of Pythagoras did ever positively, and in a literal sense, affirm his metempsychosis, or impossible transmigration of the souls of men into beasts. Of all metamorphoses or transmigrations, I believe only one, that is of Lot's wife; for that of Nabuchodonosor proceeded not so far. In all others I conceive there is no further verity than is contained in their implicit sense and morality. I believe that the whole frame of a beast doth perish, and is left in the same state after death as before it was materialized unto life: that the souls of men know neither contrary nor corruption; that they subsist beyond the body, and outlive death by the privilege of their proper natures, and without a miracle: that the souls of the faithful, as they leave earth, take possession of heaven; that those apparitions and ghosts of departed persons are not the wandering souls of men, but the unquiet walks of devils, prompting and suggesting us unto mischief, blood, and villany; instilling and stealing into our hearts that the blessed spirits are not at rest in their graves, but wander, solicitous of the affairs of the world. But that those phantasms appear often, and do frequent cemeteries, charnel-houses, and churches, it is because those are the dormitories of the dead, where the devil, like an insolent champion, beholds with pride the spoils and trophies of his victory in Adam.

<sup>1</sup> "Man-eaters."—ED.

SECT. XXXVIII.—This is that dismal conquest we all deplore, that makes us so often cry, O Adam, *quid fecisti*?<sup>1</sup> I thank God I have not those strait ligaments, or narrow obligations to the world, as to dote on life, or be convulsed and tremble at the name of death. Not that I am insensible of the dread and horror thereof; or, by raking into the bowels of the deceased, continual sight of anatomies, skeletons, or cadaverous relicks, like vespilloes, or gravemakers, I am become stupid, or have forgot the apprehension of mortality; but that, marshalling all the horrors, and contemplating the extremities thereof, I find not anything therein able to daunt the courage of a man, much less a well-resolved Christian; and therefore am not angry at the error of our first parents, or unwilling to bear a part of this common fate, and, like the best of them, to die; that is, to cease to breathe, to take a farewell of the elements; to be a kind of nothing for a moment; to be within one instant of a spirit. When I take a full view and circle of myself without this reasonable moderator, and equal piece of justice, death, I do conceive myself the miserablest person extant. Were there not another life that I hope for, all the vanities of this world should not entreat a moment's breath from me. Could the devil work my belief to imagine I could never die, I would not outlive that very thought. I have so abject a conceit of this common way of existence, this retaining to the sun and elements, I cannot think this is to be a man, or to live according to the dignity of humanity. In expectation of a better, I can with patience embrace this life; yet, in my best meditations, do often defy death. [It is a symptom of

<sup>1</sup> "What hast thou done?"—ED.

melancholy to be afraid of death, yet sometimes to desire it ; this latter I have often discovered in myself, and think no man ever desired life, as I have sometimes death.] I honour any man that contemns it ; nor can I highly love any that is afraid of it : this makes me naturally love a soldier, and honour those tattered and contemptible regiments, that will die at the command of a sergeant. For a pagan there may be some motives to be in love with life ; but, for a Christian to be amazed at death, I see not how he can escape this dilemma—that he is too sensible of this life, or hopeless of the life to come.

SECT. XXXIX.—Some divines count Adam thirty years old at his creation, because they suppose him created in the perfect age and stature of man : and surely we are all out of the computation of our age ; and every man is some months older than he bethinks him ; for we live, move, have a being, and are subject to the actions of the elements, and the malice of diseases, in that other world, the truest microcosm, the womb of our mother ; for besides that general and common existence we are conceived to hold in our chaos, and whilst we sleep within the bosom of our causes, we enjoy a being and life in three distinct worlds, wherein we receive most manifest gradations. In that obscure world, the womb of our mother, our time is short, computed by the moon ; yet longer than the days of many creatures that behold the sun ; ourselves being not yet without life, sense, and reason ; though, for the manifestation of its actions, it awaits the opportunity of objects, and seems to live there but in its root and soul of vegetation. Entering afterwards upon the scene of the world, we rise up and become

another creature ; performing the reasonable actions of man, and obscurely manifesting that part of divinity in us, but not in complement and perfection, till we have once more cast our secundine, that is, this slough of flesh, and are delivered into the last world, that is, that ineffable place of Paul, that proper *ubi*<sup>1</sup> of spirits. The smattering I have of the philosopher's stone (which is something more than the perfect exaltation of gold) hath taught me a great deal of divinity, and instructed my belief, how that immortal spirit and incorruptible substance of my soul may lie obscure, and sleep awhile within this house of flesh. Those strange and mystical transmigrations that I have observed in silkworms turned my philosophy into divinity. There is in these works of nature, which seem to puzzle reason, something divine ; and hath more in it than the eye of a common spectator doth discover.

SECT. XL.—I am naturally bashful ; nor hath conversation, age, or travel, been able to effront or enharden me ; yet I have one part of modesty, which I have seldom discovered in another, that is (to speak truly), I am not so much afraid of death as ashamed thereof ; 'tis the very disgrace and ignominy of our natures, that in a moment can so disfigure us, that our nearest friends, wife, and children, stand afraid, and start at us. The birds and beasts of the field, that before, in a natural fear, obeyed us, forgetting all allegiance, begin to prey upon us. This very conceit hath, in a tempest, disposed and left me willing to be swallowed up in the abyss of waters, wherein I had perished unseen, unpitied, without wondering eyes, tears of pity, lectures of mortality, and none had said,

<sup>1</sup> "Where."—ED.



*Quantum mutatus ab illo!*<sup>1</sup> Not that I am ashamed of the anatomy of my parts, or can accuse nature of playing the bungler in any part of me, or my own vicious life for contracting any shameful disease upon me, whereby I might not call myself as wholesome a morsel for the worms as any.

SECT. XLI.—Some, upon the courage of a fruitful issue, wherein, as in the truest chronicle, they seem to outlive themselves, can with greater patience away with death. This conceit and counterfeit subsisting in our progenies seems to me a mere fallacy, unworthy the desires of a man, that can but conceive a thought of the next world; who, in a nobler ambition, should desire to live in his substance in heaven, rather than his name and shadow in the earth. And therefore, at my death, I mean to take a total adieu of the world, not caring for a monument, history, or epitaph; not so much as the bare memory of my name to be found anywhere, but in the universal register of God. I am not yet so cynical, as to approve the testament of Diogenes,\* nor do I altogether allow that rodomontado of Lucan;

—————*Cælo tegitur, qui non habet urnam.*<sup>2</sup>

He that unburied lies wants not his hearse;  
For unto him a tomb's the universe.

but commend, in my calmer judgment, those ingenuous intentions that desire to sleep by the urns of their fathers, and strive to go the neatest way unto corruption. I do not envy the temper of crows and daws, nor the numerous and weary days of our fathers before

\* Who willed his friend not to bury him, but to hang him up with staff in hand, to fright away the crows.

<sup>1</sup> "How mightily changed from what he was!"—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "He is covered by the heavens who hath not an urn."—ED.



the flood. If there be any truth in astrology, I may outlive a jubilee ; \* as yet I have not seen one revolution of Saturn, † nor hath my pulse beat thirty years, and yet, excepting one, have seen the ashes of, and left under ground, all the kings of Europe, have been contemporary to three emperors, four grand signiors, and as many popes : methinks I have outlived myself, and begin to be weary of the sun ; I have shaken hands with delight in my warm blood and canicular days ; I perceive I do anticipate the vices of age ; the world to me is but a dream or mock-show, and we all therein but pantaloons and anticks, to my severer contemplations.

SECT. XLII.—It is not, I confess, an unlawful prayer to desire to surpass the days of our Saviour, or wish to outlive that age wherein he thought fittest to die ; yet, if (as divinity affirms) there shall be no grey hairs in heaven, but all shall rise in the perfect state of men, we do but outlive those perfections in this world, to be recalled unto them by a greater miracle in the next, and run on here but to be retrograde hereafter. Were there any hopes to outlive vice, or a point to be superannuated from sin, it were worthy our knees to implore the days of Methuselah. But age doth not rectify, but incurvate our natures, turning bad dispositions into worser habits, and (like diseases) brings on incurable vices ; for every day, as we grow weaker in age, we grow stronger in sin, and the number of our days doth but make our sins innumerable. The same vice, committed at sixteen, is not the same, though it agrees in

\* The Jewish computation for fifty years.—*MS. W.*

† The planet Saturn maketh his revolution once in thirty years.—*MS. W.*

all other circumstances, at forty; but swells and doubles from the circumstance of our ages, wherein, besides the constant and inexcusable habit of transgressing, the maturity of our judgement cuts off pretence unto excuse or pardon. Every sin, the oftener it is committed, the more it acquireth in the quality of evil; as it succeeds in time, so it proceeds in degrees of badness; for as they proceed they ever multiply, and, like figures in arithmetick, the last stands for more than all that went before it. And, though I think no man can live well once, but he that could live twice, yet, for my own part, I would not live over my hours past, or begin again the thread of my days; not upon Cicero's ground, because I have lived them well, but for fear I should live them worse. I find my growing judgement daily instruct me how to be better, but my untamed affections and confirmed vitiosity make me daily do worse. I find in my confirmed age the same sins I discovered in my youth; I committed many then because I was a child; and, because I commit them still, I am yet an infant. Therefore I perceive a man may be twice a child, before the days of dotage; and stand in need of Æson's bath before threescore.

SECT. XLIII.—And truly there goes a deal of providence to produce a man's life unto threescore; there is more required than an able temper for those years: though the radical humour contain in it sufficient oil for seventy, yet I perceive in some it gives no light past thirty: men assign not all the causes of long life, that write whole books thereof. They that found themselves on the radical balsam, or vital sulphur of the parts, determine not why Abel lived not so long as Adam. There is therefore a secret gloom or bottom

of our days : 'twas his wisdom to determine them : but his perpetual and waking providence that fulfils and accomplisheth them ; wherein the spirits, ourselves, and all the creatures of God, in a secret and disputed way, do execute his will. Let them not therefore complain of immaturity that die about thirty : they fall but like the whole world, whose solid and well-composed substance must not expect the duration and period of its constitution : when all things are completed in it, its age is accomplished ; and the last and general fever may as naturally destroy it before six thousand, as me before forty. There is therefore some other hand that twines the thread of life than that of nature : we are not only ignorant in antipathies and occult qualities ; our ends are as obscure as our beginnings ; the line of our days is drawn by night, and the various effects therein by a pencil that is invisible ; wherein, though we confess our ignorance, I am sure we do not err if we say, it is the hand of God.

SECT. XLIV.—I am much taken with two verses of Lucan, since I have been able not only, as we do at school, to construe, but understand :

*Victurosque Dei celant ut vivere durent,*<sup>1</sup>  
*Felix esse mori.*

We're all deluded, vainly searching ways  
 To make us happy by the length of days ;  
 For cunningly, to make 'us protract this breath,  
 The gods conceal the happiness of death.

There be many excellent strains in that poet, where-with his stoical genius hath liberally supplied him : and truly there are singular pieces in the philosophy of Zeno, and doctrine of the stoics, which I perceive,

<sup>1</sup> "The gods hide the happiness of death from those about to live, that they may continue living."—ED.

delivered in a pulpit, pass for current divinity: yet herein are they in extremes, that can allow a man to be his own assassin, and so highly extol the end and suicide of Cato. This is indeed not to fear death, but yet to be afraid of life. It is a brave act of valour to condemn death; but, where life is more terrible than death, it is then the truest valour to dare to live: and herein religion hath taught us a noble example; for all the valiant acts of Curtius, Scævola, or Codrus, do not parallel, or match, that one of Job; and sure there is no torture to the rack of a disease, nor any poniards in death itself, like those in the way or prologue unto it. *Emori nolo, sed me esse mortuum nihil curo*; I would not die, but care not to be dead. Were I of Cæsar's religion, I should be of his desires, and wish rather to go off at one blow, than to be sawed in pieces by the grating torture of a disease. Men that look no further than their outsides, think health an appertenance unto life, and quarrel with their constitutions for being sick; but I, that have examined the parts of man, and know upon what tender filaments that fabrick hangs, do wonder that we are not always so; and, considering the thousand doors that lead to death, do thank my God that we can die but once. 'Tis not only the mischief of diseases, and the villany of poisons, that make an end of us; we vainly accuse the fury of guns, and the new inventions of death:—it is in the power of every hand to destroy us, and we are beholden unto every one we meet, he doth not kill us. There is therefore but one comfort left, that though it be in the power of the weakest arm to take away life, it is not in the strongest to deprive us of death. God would not exempt himself from that; the misery of immortality in the

flesh he undertook not, that was in it, immortal. Certainly there is no happiness within this circle of flesh; nor is it in the opticks of these eyes to behold felicity. The first day of our jubilee is death; the devil hath therefore failed of his desires; we are happier with death than we should have been without it; there is no misery but in himself, where there is no end of misery; and so indeed, in his own sense, the stoic is in the right. He forgets that he can die, who complains of misery: we are in the power of no calamity while death is in our own.

SECT. XLV.—Now, besides this literal and positive kind of death, there are others whereof divines make mention, and those, I think, not merely metaphorical, as mortification, dying unto sin and the world. Therefore, I say, every man hath a double horoscope; one of his humanity,—his birth, another of his christianity,—his baptism: and from this do I compute or calculate my nativity; not reckoning those *horæ combustæ*,\* and odd days, or esteeming myself anything, before I was my Saviour's and enrolled in the register of Christ. Whosoever enjoys not this life, I count him but an apparition, though he wear about him the sensible affections of flesh. In these moral acceptions, the way to be immortal is to die daily; nor can I think I have the true theory of death, when I contemplate a skull or behold a skeleton with those vulgar imaginations it casts upon us. I have therefore enlarged that common *memento mori*<sup>1</sup> into a more Christian memorandum, *memento quatuor novissima*,<sup>2</sup>—those four inevitable points

\* That time when the moon is in conjunction and obscured by the sun, the astrologers call *horæ combustæ*.—MS. W.

<sup>1</sup> "Remember death."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "Remember the four new points."—ED.

of us all, death, judgment, heaven, and hell. Neither did the contemplations of the heathens rest in their graves, without a further thought, of Rhadamanth or some judicial proceeding after death, though in another way, and upon suggestion of their natural reasons. I cannot but marvel from what sibyl or oracle they stole the prophecy of the world's destruction by fire, or whence Lucan learned to say,

*Communis mundo superest rogos, ossibus astra  
Misturus——*

There yet remains to th' world one common fire,  
Wherein our bones with stars shall make one pyre.

I believe the world grows near its end; yet is neither old nor decayed, nor will ever perish upon the ruins of its own principles. As the work of creation was above nature, so is its adversary, annihilation; without which the world hath not its end, but its mutation. Now, what force should be able to consume it thus far, without the breath of God, which is the truest consuming flame, my philosophy cannot inform me. Some believe there went not a minute to the world's creation, nor shall there go to its destruction; those six days, so punctually described, make not to them one moment, but rather seem to manifest the method and idea of that great work in the intellect of God than the manner how he proceeded in its operation. I cannot dream that there should be at the last day any such judicial proceeding, or calling to the bar, as indeed the Scripture seems to imply, and the literal commentators do conceive: for unspeakable mysteries in the Scriptures are often delivered in a vulgar and illustrative way, and, being written unto man, are delivered, not as they truly are, but as they may be under-



stood; wherein, notwithstanding, the different interpretations according to different capacities may stand firm with our devotion, nor be any way prejudicial to each single edification.

SECT. XLVI.—Now, to determine the day and year of this inevitable time, is not only convincible and statute madness, but also manifest impiety. How shall we interpret Elias's six thousand years, or imagine the secret communicated to a Rabbi which God hath denied unto his angels? It had been an excellent quære to have posed the devil of Delphos,\* and must needs have forced him to some strange amphibology. It hath not only mocked the predictions of sundry astrologers in ages past, but the prophecies of many melancholy heads in these present; who, neither understanding reasonably things past nor present, pretend a knowledge of things to come; heads ordained only to manifest the incredible effects of melancholy, and to fulfil old prophecies,† rather than be the authors of new. “In those days there shall come wars and rumours of wars” to me seems no prophecy, but a constant truth in all times verified since it was pronounced. “There shall be signs in the moon and stars”; how comes he then like a thief in the night, when he gives an item of his coming? That common sign, drawn from the revelation of antichrist, is as obscure as any; in our common compute he hath been come these many years; but, for my own part, to speak freely [omitting those ridiculous anagrams‡], I am half of [Paracelsus's] opinion [and think] that antichrist is

\* The oracle of Apollo.—*MS. W.*

† In those days there shall come liars and false prophets.

‡ Whereby men labour to prove the pope antichrist from their name making up the number of the beast.—*All the MSS.*



the philosopher's stone in divinity, for the discovery and invention whereof, though there be prescribed rules, and probable inductions, yet hath hardly any man attained the perfect discovery thereof. That general opinion, that the world grows near its end, hath possessed all ages past as nearly as ours. I am afraid that the souls that now depart cannot escape that lingering expostulation of the saints under the altar, *quousque, Domine?* how long, O Lord? and groan in the expectation of the great jubilee.

SECT. XLVII.—This is the day that must make good that great attribute of God, his justice; that must reconcile those unanswerable doubts that torment the wisest understandings; and reduce those seeming inequalities and respective distributions in this world, to an equality and recompensive justice in the next. This is that one day, that shall include and comprehend all that went before it; wherein, as in the last scene, all the actors must enter, to complete and make up the catastrophe of this great piece. This is the day whose memory hath, only, power to make us honest in the dark, and to be virtuous without a witness. *Ipsa sui pretium virtus sibi*, that virtue is her own reward, is but a cold principle, and not able to maintain our variable resolutions in a constant and settled way of goodness. I have practised that honest artifice of Seneca, and, in my retired and solitary imaginations to detain me from the foulness of vice, have fancied to myself the presence of my dear and worthiest friends, before whom I should lose my head rather than be vicious; yet herein I found that there was nought but moral honesty; and this was not to be virtuous for his sake who must reward us at the last. I have tried if

I could reach that great resolution of his, to be honest without a thought of heaven or hell; and, indeed I found, upon a natural inclination, and inbred loyalty unto virtue, that I could serve her without a livery, yet not in that resolved and venerable way, but that the frailty of my nature, upon an easy temptation, might be induced to forget her. The life, therefore, and spirit of all our actions is the resurrection, and a stable apprehension that our ashes shall enjoy the fruit of our pious endeavours; without this, all religion is a fallacy, and those impieties of Lucian, Euripides, and Julian, are no blasphemies, but subtile verities; and atheists have been the only philosophers.

SECT. XLVIII.—How shall the dead arise, is no question of my faith; to believe only possibilities is not faith, but mere philosophy. Many things are true in divinity, which are neither inducible by reason nor confirmable by sense; and many things in philosophy confirmable by sense, yet not inducible by reason. Thus it is impossible, by any solid or demonstrative reasons, to persuade a man to believe the conversion of the needle to the north; though this be possible and true, and easily credible, upon a single experiment unto the sense. I believe that our estranged and divided ashes shall unite again; that our separated dust, after so many pilgrimages and transformations into the parts of minerals, plants, animals, elements, shall, at the voice of God, return into their primitive shapes, and join again to make up their primary and predestinate forms. As at the creation there was a separation of that confused mass into its species; so at the destruction thereof there shall be a separation into its distinct individuals. As, at the creation of the world, all the distinct species

that we behold lay involved in one mass, till the fruitful voice of God separated this united multitude into its several species, so, at the last day, when those corrupted relicks shall be scattered in the wilderness of forms, and seem to have forgot their proper habits, God, by a powerful voice, shall command them back into their proper shapes, and call them out by their single individuals. Then shall appear the fertility of Adam, and the magick of that sperm that hath dilated into so many millions. I have often beheld, as a miracle, that artificial resurrection and revivification of mercury, how being mortified into a thousand shapes, it assumes again its own, and returns into its numerical self. Let us speak naturally, and like philosophers. The forms of alterable bodies in these sensible corruptions perish not; nor, as we imagine, wholly quit their mansions; but retire and contract themselves into their secret and unaccessible parts; where they may best protect themselves from the action of their antagonist. A plant or vegetable consumed to ashes to a contemplative and school-philosopher seems utterly destroyed, and the form to have taken his leave for ever; but to a sensible artist the forms are not perished, but withdrawn into their incombustible part, where they lie secure from the action of that devouring element. This is made good by experience, which can from the ashes of a plant revive the plant, and from its cinders recall it into its stalk and leaves again. What the art of man can do in these inferior pieces, what blasphemy is it to affirm the finger of God cannot do in those more perfect and sensible structures? This is that mystical philosophy, from whence no true scholar becomes an atheist, but from the visible effects of nature grows up a real divine,

and beholds not in a dream, as Ezekiel, but in an ocular and visible object, the types of his resurrection.

SECT. XLIX.—Now, the necessary mansions of our restored selves are those two contrary and incompatible places we call heaven and hell. To define them, or strictly to determine what and where these are, surpasseth my divinity. That elegant apostle, which seemed to have a glimpse of heaven, hath left but a negative description thereof; which neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor can enter into the heart of man: he was translated out of himself to behold it; but, being returned into himself, could not express it, Saint John's description by emeralds, chrysolites, and precious stones, is too weak to express the material heaven we behold. Briefly, therefore, where the soul hath the full measure and complement of happiness; where the boundless appetite of that spirit remains completely satisfied that it can neither desire addition nor alteration; that, I think is truly heaven: and this can only be in the enjoyment of that essence, whose infinite goodness is able to terminate the desires of itself, and the unsatiable wishes of ours. Wherever God will thus manifest himself, there is heaven, though within the circle of this sensible world. Thus, the soul of man may be in heaven anywhere, even within the limits of his own proper body; and when it ceaseth to live in the body it may remain in its own soul, that is, its Creator. And thus we may say that Saint Paul, whether in the body or out of the body, was yet in heaven. To place it in the empyreal, or beyond the tenth sphere, is to forget the world's destruction; for when this sensible world shall be destroyed, all shall then be here as it is now there, an

empyrean heaven, a *quasi* vacuity ; when to ask where heaven is, is to demand where the presence of God is, or where we have the glory of that happy vision. Moses, that was bred up in all the learning of the Egyptians, committed a gross absurdity in philosophy, when with these eyes of flesh he desired to see God, and petitioned his Maker, that is truth itself, to a contradiction. Those that imagine heaven and hell neighbours, and conceive a vicinity between those two extremes, upon consequence of the parable, where Dives discoursed with Lazarus, in Abraham's bosom, do too grossly conceive of those glorified creatures, whose eyes shall easily out-see the sun, and behold without perspective the extremest distances : for if there shall be, in our glorified eyes, the faculty of sight and reception of objects, I could think the visible species there to be in as unlimitable a way as now the intellectual. I grant that two bodies placed beyond the tenth sphere, or in a vacuity, according to Aristotle's philosophy, could not behold each other, because there wants a body or medium to hand and transport the visible rays of the object unto the sense ; but when there shall be a general defect of either medium to convey, or light to prepare and dispose that medium, and yet a perfect vision, we must suspend the rules of our philosophy, and make all good by a more absolute piece of opticks.

SECT. L.—I cannot tell how to say that fire is the essence of hell ; I know not what to make of purgatory, or conceive a flame that can either prey upon, or purify the substance of a soul. Those flames of sulphur, mentioned in the scriptures, I take not to be understood of this present hell, but of that to come,

where fire shall make up the complement of our tortures, and have a body or subject whereon to manifest its tyranny. Some who have had the honour to be textuary in divinity are of opinion it shall be the same specifical fire with ours. This is hard to conceive, yet can I make good how even that may prey upon our bodies, and yet not consume us : for in this material world, there are bodies that persist invincible in the powerfulest flames ; and though, by the action of fire, they fall into ignition and liquation, yet will they never suffer a destruction. I would gladly know how Moses, with an actual fire, calcined or burnt the golden calf into powder : for that mystical metal of gold, whose solary and celestial nature I admire, exposed unto the violence of fire, grows only hot, and liquefies, but consumeth not ; so when the consumable and volatile pieces of our bodies shall be refined into a more impregnable and fixed temper, like gold, though they suffer from the action of flames, they shall never perish, but lie immortal in the arms of fire. And surely, if this frame must suffer only by the action of this element, there will many bodies escape ; and not only heaven, but earth will not be at an end, but rather a beginning. For at present it is not earth, but a composition of fire, water, earth, and air ; but at that time, spoiled of these ingredients, it shall appear in a substance more like itself, its ashes. Philosophers that opinioned the world's destruction by fire, did never dream of annihilation, which is beyond the power of sublunary causes ; for the last and proper action of that element is but vitrification, or a reduction of a body into glass ; and therefore some of our chymicks facetiously affirm, that, at the last fire, all



shall be crystalized and reverberated into glass, which is the utmost action of that element. Nor need we fear this term, annihilation, or wonder that God will destroy the works of his creation : for man subsisting, who is, and will then truly appear, a microcosm, the world cannot be said to be destroyed. For the eyes of God, and perhaps also of our glorified selves, shall as really behold and contemplate the world, in its epitome or contracted essence, as now it doth at large and in its dilated substance. In the seed of a plant, to the eyes of God, and to the understanding of man, though in an invisible way, there exist the perfect leaves, flowers, and fruit thereof ; for things that are in *posse* to the sense, are actually existent to the understanding. Thus God beholds all things, who contemplates as fully his works in their epitome as in their full volume, and beheld as amply the whole world, in that little compendium of the sixth day, as in the scattered and dilated pieces of those five before.

SECT. LI.—Men commonly set forth the torments of hell by fire, and the extremity of corporal afflictions, and describe hell in the same method that Mahomet doth heaven. This indeed makes a noise, and drums in popular ears : but if this be the terrible piece thereof, it is not worthy to stand in diameter with heaven, whose happiness consists in that part that is best able to comprehend it, that immortal essence, that translated divinity and colony of God, the soul. Surely, though we place hell under earth, the devil's walk and purlieu is about it. Men speak too popularly who place it in those flaming mountains, which to grosser apprehensions represent hell. The heart of man is the place the devils dwell in ; I feel sometimes a hell within myself ;



Lucifer keeps his court in my breast ; Legion is revived in me. There are as many hells as Anaxagoras conceited worlds. There was more than one hell in Magdalene, when there were seven devils ; for every devil is an hell unto himself ; he holds enough of torture in his own *ubi* ;<sup>1</sup> and needs not the misery of circumference to afflict him : and thus, a distracted conscience here is a shadow or introduction unto hell hereafter. Who can but pity the merciful intention of those hands that do destroy themselves ? The devil, were it in his power, would do the like ; which being impossible, his miseries are endless, and he suffers most in that attribute wherein he is impassible, his immortality.

SECT. LII.—I thank God, and with joy I mention it, I was never afraid of hell, nor ever grew pale at the description of that place. I have so fixed my contemplations on heaven, that I have almost forgot the idea of hell ; and am afraid rather to lose the joys of one than endure the misery of the other : to be deprived of them is a perfect hell, and needs methinks no addition to complete our afflictions. That terrible term hath never detained me from sin, nor do I owe any good action to the name thereof. I fear God, yet am not afraid of him ; his mercies make me ashamed of my sins, before his judgments afraid thereof : these are the forced and secondary method of his wisdom, which he useth but as the last remedy, and upon provocation ;—a course rather to deter the wicked, than incite the virtuous to his worship. I can hardly think there was ever any scared into heaven : they go the fairest way to heaven that would serve God without a hell : other mercenaries, that crouch unto him in fear

<sup>1</sup> “Where.”—ED.

of hell, though they term themselves the servants, are indeed but the slaves, of the Almighty.

SECT. LIII.—And to be true, and speak my soul, when I survey the occurrences of my life, and call into account the finger of God, I can perceive nothing but an abyss and mass of mercies, either in general to mankind, or in particular to myself. And, whether out of the prejudice of my affection, or an inverting and partial conceit of his mercies, I know not,—but those which others term crosses, afflictions, judgments, misfortunes, to me, who inquire further into them than their visible effects, they both appear, and in event have ever proved, the secret and dissembled favours of his affection. It is a singular piece of wisdom to apprehend truly, and without passion, the works of God, and so well to distinguish his justice from his mercy as not to miscall those noble attributes; yet it is likewise an honest piece of logick so to dispute and argue the proceedings of God as to distinguish even his judgments into mercies. For God is merciful unto all, because better to the worst than the best deserve; and to say he punisheth none in this world, though it be a paradox, is no absurdity. To one that hath committed murder, if the judge should only ordain a fine, it were a madness to call this a punishment, and to repine at the sentence, rather than admire the clemency of the judge. Thus, our offences being mortal, and deserving not only death but damnation, if the goodness of God be content to traverse and pass them over with a loss, misfortune, or disease; what frenzy were it to term this a punishment, rather than an extremity of mercy, and to groan under the rod of his judgments rather than admire the sceptre of his mercies! Therefore to adore, honour, and

admire him, is a debt of gratitude due from the obligation of our nature, states, and conditions : and with these thoughts he that knows them best will not deny that I adore him. That I obtain heaven, and the bliss thereof, is accidental, and not the intended work of my devotion ; it being a felicity I can neither think to deserve nor scarce in modesty to expect. For these two ends of us all, either as rewards or punishments, are mercifully ordained and disproportionately disposed unto our actions ; the one being so far beyond our deserts, the other so infinitely below our demerits.

SECT. LIV.—There is no salvation to those that believe not in Christ ; that is, say some, since his nativity, and, as divinity affirmeth, before also ; which makes me much apprehend the end of those honest worthies and philosophers which died before his incarnation. It is hard to place those souls in hell, whose worthy lives do teach us virtue on earth. Methinks, among those many subdivisions of hell, there might have been one limbo left for these. What a strange vision will it be to see their poetical fictions converted into verities, and their imagined and fancied furies into real devils ! How strange to them will sound the history of Adam, when they shall suffer for him they never heard of ! When they [that] derive their genealogy from the gods, shall know they are the unhappy issue of sinful man ! It is an insolent part of reason, to controvert the works of God, or question the justice of his proceedings. Could humility teach others, as it hath instructed me, to contemplate the infinite and incomprehensible distance betwixt the Creator and the creature ; or did we seriously perpend that one simile of St. Paul, “shall the vessel say to the potter, why

hast thou made me thus?" it would prevent these arrogant disputes of reason : nor would we argue the definitive sentence of God, either to heaven or hell. Men that live according to the right rule and law of reason, live but in their own kind, as beasts do in theirs ; who justly obey the prescript of their natures, and therefore cannot reasonably demand a reward of their actions, as only obeying the natural dictates of their reason. It will, therefore, and must, at last appear, that all salvation is through Christ ; which verity, I fear, these great examples of virtue must confirm, and make it good how the perfectest actions of earth have no title or claim unto heaven.

SECT. LV.—Nor truly do I think the lives of these, or of any other, were ever correspondent, or in all points conformable, unto their doctrines. It is evident that Aristotle transgressed the rule of his own ethicks ; the stoicks, that condemn passion, and command a man to laugh in Phalaris's bull, could not endure without a groan, a fit of the stone or colick. The scepticks, that affirmed they knew nothing, even in that opinion confute themselves, and thought they knew more than all the world beside. Diogenes I hold to be the most vainglorious man of his time, and more ambitious in refusing all honours, than Alexander in rejecting none. Vice and the devil put a fallacy upon our reasons ; and, provoking us too hastily to run from it, entangle and profound us deeper in it. The duke of Venice, that [yearly] weds himself unto the sea, by [casting thereinto] a ring of gold, I will not accuse of prodigality, because it is a solemnity of good use and consequence in the state : but the philosopher, that threw his money into the sea to avoid avarice,

was a notorious prodigal. There is no road or ready way to virtue ; it is not an easy point of art to disentangle ourselves from this riddle or web of sin. To perfect virtue, as to religion, there is required a *panoplia*, or complete armour ; that whilst we lie at close ward against one vice, we lie not open to the veney of another. And indeed wiser discretions, that have the thread of reason to conduct them, offend without a pardon ; whereas under heads may stumble without dishonour. There go so many circumstances to piece up one good action, that it is a lesson to be good, and we are forced to be virtuous by the book. Again, the practice of men holds not an equal pace, yea and often runs counter to their theory ; we naturally know what is good, but naturally pursue what is evil : the rhetorick wherewith I persuade another cannot persuade myself. There is a depraved appetite in us, that will with patience hear the learned instructions of reason, but yet perform no further than agrees to its own irregular humour. In brief, we all are monsters ; that is, a composition of man and beast : wherein we must endeavour, to be as the poets fancy that wise man, Chiron ; that is, to have the region of man above that of beast, and sense to sit but at the feet of reason. Lastly, I do desire with God that all, but yet affirm with men that few, shall know salvation,—that the bridge is narrow, the passage strait unto life : yet those who do confine the church of God either to particular nations, churches, or families, have made it far narrower than our Saviour ever meant it.

SECT. LVI.—The vulgarity of those judgments that wrap the church of God in Strabo's cloak, and restrain it unto Europe, seem to me as bad geographers

as Alexander, who thought he had conquered all the world, when he had not subdued the half of any part thereof. For we cannot deny the church of God both in Asia and Africa, if we do not forget the peregrinations of the apostles, the deaths of the martyrs, the sessions of many and (even in our reformed judgment) lawful councils, held in those parts in the minority and nonage of ours. Nor must a few differences, more remarkable in the eyes of man than, perhaps, in the judgment of God, excommunicate from heaven one another; much less those Christians who are in a manner all martyrs, maintaining their faith in the noble way of persecution, and serving God in the fire, whereas we honour him but in the sunshine.

'Tis true, we all hold there is a number of elect, and many to be saved; yet, take our opinions together, and from the confusion thereof, there will be no such thing as salvation, nor shall any one be saved: for, first, the church of Rome condemneth us; we likewise them; the sub-reformists and secretaries sentence the doctrine of our church as damnable; the atomist, or familist, reprobates all these; and all these, them again. Thus, whilst the mercies of God do promise us heaven, our conceits and opinions exclude us from that place. There must be therefore more than one St. Peter; particular churches and sects usurp the gates of heaven, and turn the key against each other; and thus we go to heaven against each other's wills, conceits, and opinions, and, with as much uncharity as ignorance, do err, I fear, in points not only of our own, but one another's salvation.

SECT. LVII.—I believe many are saved who to man seem reprobated, and many are reprobated who in the



opinion and sentence of man stand elected. 'There will appear, at the last day, strange and unexpected examples, both of his justice and his mercy ; and, therefore, to define either is folly in man, and insolency even in the devils. Those acute and subtile spirits, in all their sagacity, can hardly divine who shall be saved ; which if they could prognostick, their labour were at an end, nor need they compass the earth, seeking whom they may devour. Those who, upon a rigid application of the law, sentence Solomon unto damnation, condemn not only him, but themselves, and the whole world ; for by the letter and written word of God, we are without exception in the state of death : but there is a prerogative of God, and an arbitrary pleasure above the letter of his own law, by which alone we can pretend unto salvation, and through which Solomon might be as easily saved as those who condemn him.

SECT. LVIII.—The number of those who pretend unto salvation, and those infinite swarms who think to pass through the eye of this needle, have much amazed me. That name and compellation of "little flock" doth not comfort, but deject, my devotion ; especially when I reflect upon mine own unworthiness, wherein, according to my humble apprehensions, I am below them all. I believe there shall never be an anarchy in heaven ; but, as there are hierarchies amongst the angels, so shall there be degrees of priority amongst the saints. Yet is it, I protest, beyond my ambition to aspire unto the first ranks ; my desires only are, and I shall be happy therein, to be but the last man, and bring up the rear in heaven.

SECT. LIX.—Again, I am confident, and fully persuaded, yet dare not take my oath, of my salvation. I



am, as it were, sure, and do believe without all doubt, that there is such a city as Constantinople; yet, for me to take my oath thereon were a kind of perjury, because I hold no infallible warrant from my own sense to confirm me in the certainty thereof. And truly, though many pretend to an absolute certainty of their salvation, yet, when an humble soul shall contemplate her own unworthiness, she shall meet with many doubts, and suddenly find how little we stand in need of the precept of St. Paul, “work out your salvation *with fear and trembling*.” That which is the cause of my election, I hold to be the cause of my salvation, which was the mercy and *beneplacit*<sup>1</sup> of God, before I was, or the foundation of the world. “Before Abraham was, I am,” is the saying of Christ, yet is it true in some sense if I say it of myself; for I was not only before myself but Adam, that is, in the idea of God, and the decree of that synod held from all eternity. And in this sense, I say, the world was before the creation, and at an end before it had a beginning. And thus was I dead before I was alive; though my grave be England, my dying place was Paradise; and Eve miscarried of me, before she conceived of Cain.

SECT. LX.—Insolent zeals, that do decry good works and rely only upon faith, take not away merit: for, depending upon the efficacy of their faith, they enforce the condition of God, and in a more sophisticated way do seem to challenge heaven. It was decreed by God that only those that lapped in the water like dogs, should have the honour to destroy the Midianites; yet could none of those justly challenge, or imagine

<sup>1</sup> “It pleaseth well.”—ED.

he deserved, that honour thereupon. I do not deny but that true faith, and such as God requires, is not only a mark or token, but also a means, of our salvation; but, where to find this, is as obscure to me as my last end. And if our Saviour could object, unto his own disciples and favourites, a faith that, to the quantity of a grain of mustard seed, is able to remove mountains; surely that which we boast of is not anything, or, at the most, but a remove from nothing.

This is the tenour of my belief; wherein, though there may be many things singular, and to the humour of my irregular self, yet, if they square not with maturer judgments, I disclaim them, and do no further favour them than the learned and best judgments shall authorize them.

## PART THE SECOND

SECT. 1.—Now, for that other virtue of charity, without which faith is a mere notion and of no existence, I have ever endeavoured to nourish the merciful disposition and humane inclination I borrowed from my parents, and regulate it to the written and prescribed laws of charity. And, if I hold the true anatomy of myself, I am delineated and naturally framed to such a piece of virtue,—for I am of a constitution so general that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in diet, humour, air, anything. I wonder not at the French for their dishes of frogs, snails, and toadstools, nor at the Jews for locusts and grasshoppers; but, being amongst them, make them my common viands; and I find they agree with my stomach as well as theirs. I could digest a salad gathered in a church-yard as well as in a garden. I cannot start at the presence of a serpent, scorpion, lizard, or salamander; at the sight of a toad or viper, I find in me no desire to take up a stone to destroy them. I feel not in myself those common antipathies that I can discover in others: those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch; but, where I find their actions in balance with my countrymen's, I honour,

love, and embrace them, in the same degree. I was born in the eighth climate, but seem to be framed and constellated unto all. I am no plant that will not prosper out of a garden. All places, all airs, make unto me one country; I am in England everywhere, and under any meridian. I have been shipwrecked, yet am not enemy with the sea or winds; I can study, play, or sleep, in a tempest. In brief I am averse from nothing: my conscience would give me the lie if I should say I absolutely detest or hate any essence, but the devil; or so at least abhor anything, but that we might come to composition. If there be any among those common objects of hatred I do condemn and laugh at, it is that great enemy of reason, virtue, and religion, the multitude; that numerous piece of monstrosity, which, taken asunder, seem men, and the reasonable creatures of God, but, confused together, make but one great beast, and a monstrosity more prodigious than Hydra. It is no breach of charity to call these fools; it is the style all holy writers have afforded them, set down by Solomon in canonical scripture, and a point of our faith to believe so. Neither in the name of multitude do I only include the base and minor sort of people: there is a rabble even amongst the gentry; a sort of plebeian heads, whose fancy moves with the same wheel as those; men in the same level with mechanicks, though their fortunes do somewhat gild their infirmities, and their purses compound for their follies. But, as in casting account three or four men together come short in account of one man placed by himself below them, so neither are a troop of these ignorant Doradoes of that true esteem and value as many a forlorn person,

whose condition doth place him below their feet. Let us speak like politicians ; there is a nobility without heraldry, a natural dignity, whereby one man is ranked with another, another filed before him, according to the quality of his desert, and pre-eminence of his good parts. Though the corruption of these times, and the bias of present practice, wheel another way, thus it was in the first and primitive commonwealths, and is yet in the integrity and cradle of well-ordered polities : till corruption getteth ground ;—runder desires labouring after that which wiser considerations contemn ;—every one having a liberty to amass and heap up riches, and they a licence or faculty to do or purchase anything.

SECT. II.—This general and indifferent temper of mine doth more nearly dispose me to this noble virtue. It is a happiness to be born and framed unto virtue, and to grow up from the seeds of nature, rather than the inoculations and forced grafts of education : yet, if we are directed only by our particular natures, and regulate our inclinations by no higher rule than that of our reasons, we are but moralists ; divinity will still call us heathens. Therefore this great work of charity must have other motives, ends, and impulsions. I give no alms to satisfy the hunger of my brother, but to fulfil and accomplish the will and command of my God ; I draw not my purse for his sake that demands it, but his that enjoined it ; I relieve no man upon the rhetorick of his miseries, nor to content mine own commiserating disposition ; for this is still but moral charity, and an act that oweth more to passion than reason. He that relieves another upon the bare suggestion and bowels of pity doth not this so much for his

sake as for his own : for by compassion we make another's misery our own ; and so, by relieving them, we relieve ourselves also. It is as erroneous a conceit to redress other men's misfortunes upon the common considerations of merciful natures, that it may be one day our own case ; for this is a sinister and politick kind of charity, whereby we seem to bespeak the pities of men in the like occasions. And truly I have observed that those professed eleemosynaries, though in a crowd or multitude, do yet direct and place their petitions on a few and selected persons ; there is surely a physiognomy, which those experienced and master mendicants observe, whereby they instantly discover a merciful aspect, and will single out a face, wherein they spy the signatures and marks of mercy. For there are mystically in our faces certain characters which carry in them the motto of our souls, wherein he that cannot read A B C may read our natures. I hold, moreover, that there is a phytognomy, or physiognomy, not only of men, but of plants and vegetables ; and in every one of them some outward figures which hang as signs or bushes of their inward forms. The finger of God hath left an inscription upon all his works, not graphical, or composed of letters, but of their several forms, constitutions, parts, and operations, which, aptly joined together, do make one word that doth express their natures. By these letters God calls the stars by their names ; and by this alphabet Adam assigned to every creature a name peculiar to its nature. Now, there are, besides these characters in our faces, certain mystical figures in our hands, which I dare not call mere dashes, strokes *à la volée* or at random, because delineated by a pencil that never works in vain ; and

hereof I take more particular notice, because I carry that in mine own hand which I could never read of nor discover in another. Aristotle, I confess, in his acute and singular book of physiognomy, hath made no mention of chiromancy : yet I believe the Egyptians, who were nearer addicted to those abstruse and mystical sciences, had a knowledge therein : to which those vagabond and counterfeit Egyptians did after pretend, and perhaps retained a few corrupted principles, which sometimes might verify their prognosticks.

It is the common wonder of all men, how, among so many millions of faces, there should be none alike : now, contrary, I wonder as much how there should be any. He that shall consider how many thousand several words have been carelessly and without study composed out of twenty-four letters ; withal, how many hundred lines there are to be drawn in the fabrick of one man ; shall easily find that this variety is necessary : and it will be very hard that they shall so concur as to make one portrait like another. Let a painter carelessly limn out a million of faces, and you shall find them all different ; yea, let him have his copy before him, yet, after all his art, there will remain a sensible distinction : for the pattern or example of everything is the perfectest in that kind, whereof we still come short, though we transcend or go beyond it ; because herein it is wide, and agrees not in all points unto its copy. Nor doth the similitude of creatures disparage the variety of nature, nor any way confound the works of God. For even in things alike there is diversity ; and those that do seem to accord do manifestly disagree. And thus is man like God ; for, in the same things that we resemble him we are utterly



different from him. There was never anything so like another as in all points to concur; there will ever some reserved difference slip in, to prevent the identity; without which two several things would not be alike, but the same, which is impossible.

SECT. III.—But, to return from philosophy to charity, I hold not so narrow a conceit of this virtue as to conceive, that to give alms is only to be charitable, or think a piece of liberality can comprehend the total of charity. Divinity hath wisely divided the act thereof into many branches, and hath taught us, in this narrow way, many paths unto goodness; as many ways as we may do good, so many ways we may be charitable. There are infirmities not only of body, but of soul and fortunes, which do require the merciful hand of our abilities. I cannot condemn a man for ignorance, but behold him with as much pity as I do Lazarus. It is no greater charity to clothe his body than apparel the nakedness of his soul. It is an honourable object to see the reasons of other men wear our liveries, and their borrowed understandings do homage to the bounty of ours. It is the cheapest way of beneficence, and, like the natural charity of the sun, illuminates another without obscuring itself. To be reserved and caitiff in this part of goodness is the sordidest piece of covetousness, and more contemptible than the pecuniary avarice. To this (as calling myself a scholar) I am obliged by the duty of my condition. I make not therefore my head a grave, but a treasury of knowledge. I intend no monopoly, but a community in learning. I study not for my own sake only, but for theirs that study not for themselves. I envy no man that knows more than myself, but pity them that know less. I instruct no

man as an exercise of my knowledge, or with an intent rather to nourish and keep it alive in mine own head than beget and propagate it in his. And, in the midst of all my endeavours, there is but one thought that dejects me, that my acquired parts must perish with myself, nor can be legacied among my honoured friends. I cannot fall out [with] or condemn a man for an error, or conceive why a difference in opinion should divide an affection; for controversies, disputes, and argumentations, both in philosophy and in divinity, if they meet with discreet and peaceable natures, do not infringe the laws of charity. In all disputes, so much as there is of passion, so much there is of nothing to the purpose; for then reason, like a bad hound, spends upon a false scent, and forsakes the question first started. And this is one reason why controversies are never determined; for, though they be amply proposed, they are scarce at all handled; they do so swell with unnecessary digressions; and the parenthesis on the party is often as large as the main discourse upon the subject. The foundations of religion are already established, and the principles of salvation subscribed unto by all. There remain not many controversies worthy a passion, and yet never any dispute it without, not only in divinity but inferior arts. What a *βατραχομυομαχία*<sup>1</sup> and hot skirmish is betwixt S. and T. in Lucian! How do grammarians hack and slash for the genitive case\* in Jupiter! How do they break their own pates, to salve that of Priscian! *Si foret in terris, rideret Democritus.*<sup>2</sup> Yea, even amongst wiser militants, how many wounds have been given and

\* Whether Jovis or Jupitris.

<sup>1</sup> "Battle of frogs and mice."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "If he were on earth, Democritus would laugh."—ED.

credits slain, for the poor victory of an opinion, or beggarly conquest of a distinction! Scholars are men of peace, they bear no arms, but their tongues are sharper than Actius's razor; their pens carry further, and give a louder report than thunder. I had rather stand in the shock of a basilisk than in the fury of a merciless pen. It is not mere zeal to learning, or devotion to the muses, that wiser princes patron the arts, and carry an indulgent aspect unto scholars; but a desire to have their names eternized by the memory of their writings, and a fear of the revengeful pen of succeeding ages: for these are the men that, when they have played their parts, and had their *exits*, must step out and give the moral of their scenes, and deliver unto posterity an inventory of their virtues and vices. And surely there goes a great deal of conscience to the compiling of an history: there is no reproach to the scandal of a story; it is such an authentick kind of falsehood, that with authority belies our good names to all nations and posterity.

SECT. IV.—There is another offence unto charity, which no author hath ever written of, and few take notice of, and that's the reproach, not of whole professions, mysteries, and conditions, but of whole nations, wherein by opprobrious epithets we miscall each other, and, by an uncharitable logick, from a disposition in a few, conclude a habit in all.

Le mutin Anglois, et le bravache Escossois;  
 Le boure Italien, et le fol François;  
 Le poltron Romain, le larron de Gascogne,  
 L'Espagnol superbe, et l'Alleman yvrongne.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The riotous Englishman, the swaggering Scot, the immoral Italian, and the mad Frenchman; the cowardly Roman, the thief of Gascony, the proud Spaniard, and the drunken German."—ED.

St. Paul, that calls the Cretians liars, doth it but indirectly, and upon quotation of their own poet. It is as bloody a thought in one way as Nero's was in another. For by a word we wound a thousand, and at one blow assassin the honour of a nation. It is as complete a piece of madness to misal and rave against the times ; or think to recall men to reason by a fit of passion. Democritus, that thought to laugh the times into goodness, seems to me as deeply hypochondriack as Heraclitus, that bewailed them. It moves not my spleen to behold the multitude in their proper humours ; that is, in their fits of folly and madness, as well understanding that wisdom is not profaned unto the world ; and it is the privilege of a few to be virtuous. They that endeavour to abolish vice destroy also virtue ; for contraries, though they destroy one another, are yet the life of one another. Thus virtue (abolish vice) is an idea. Again, the community of sin doth not disparage goodness ; for, when vice gains upon the major part, virtue, in whom it remains, becomes more excellent, and, being lost in some, multiplies its goodness in others, which remain untouched, and persist entire in the general inundation. I can therefore behold vice without a satire, content only with an admonition, or instructive reprehension ; for noble natures, and such as are capable of goodness, are railed into vice, that might as easily be admonished into virtue ; and we should be all so far the orators of goodness as to protect her from the power of vice, and maintain the cause of injured truth. No man can justly censure or condemn another ; because, indeed, no man truly knows another. This I perceive in myself ; for I am in the dark to all the world, and my nearest friends behold me but in a cloud.

Those that know me but superficially think less of me than I do of myself; those of my near acquaintance think more; God who truly knows me, knows that I am nothing: for he only beholds me, and all the world, who looks not on us through a derived ray, or a trajection of a sensible species, but beholds the substance without the help of accidents, and the forms of things, as we their operations. Further, no man can judge another, because no man knows himself; for we censure others but as they disagree from that humour which we fancy laudable in ourselves, and commend others but for that wherein they seem to quadrate and consent with us. So that in conclusion, all is but that we all condemn, self-love. 'Tis the general complaint of these times, and perhaps of those past, that charity grows cold; which I perceive most verified in those which most do manifest the fires and flames of zeal; for it is a virtue that best agrees with coldest natures, and such as are complexioned for humility. But how shall we expect charity towards others, when we are uncharitable to ourselves? "Charity begins at home," is the voice of the world; yet is every man his greatest enemy, and as it were his own executioner. *Non occides*,<sup>1</sup> is the commandment of God, yet scarce observed by any man; for I perceive every man is his own Atropos, and lends a hand to cut the thread of his own days. Cain was not therefore the first murderer, but Adam, who brought in death; whereof he beheld the practice and example in his own son Abel; and saw that verified in the experience of another which faith could not persuade him in the theory of himself.

SECT. v.—There is, I think, no man that appre-

<sup>1</sup> "Thou shalt not kill."—ED.

hendeth his own miseries less than myself; and no man that so nearly apprehends another's. I could lose an arm without a tear, and with few groans, methinks, be quartered into pieces; yet can I weep most seriously at a play, and receive with a true passion the counterfeit griefs of those known and professed impostures. It is a barbarous part of inhumanity to add unto any afflicted parties misery, or endeavour to multiply in any man a passion whose single nature is already above his patience. This was the greatest affliction of Job, and those oblique expostulations of his friends a deeper injury than the down-right blows of the devil. It is not the tears of our own eyes only, but of our friends also, that do exhaust the current of our sorrows; which, falling into many streams, runs more peaceably, and is contented with a narrower channel. It is an act within the power of charity, to translate a passion out of one breast into another, and to divide a sorrow almost out of itself; for an affliction, like a dimension, may be so divided as, if not indivisible, at least to become insensible. Now with my friend I desire not to share or participate, but to engross, his sorrows; that, by making them mine own, I may more easily discuss them: for in mine own reason, and within myself, I can command that which I cannot entreat without myself, and within the circle of another. I have often thought those noble pairs and examples of friendship, not so truly histories of what had been, as fictions of what should be; but I now perceive nothing in them but possibilities, nor anything in the heroick examples of Damon and Pythias, Achilles, and Patroclus, which, methinks, upon some grounds, I could not perform within the narrow compass of myself.



That a man should lay down his life for his friend seems strange to vulgar affections and such as confine themselves within that worldly principle, "charity begins at home." For mine own part, I could never remember the relations that I held unto myself, nor the respect that I owe unto my own nature, in the cause of God, my country, and my friends. Next to these three, I do embrace myself. I confess I do not observe that order that the schools ordain our affections,—to love our parents, wives, children, and then our friends ; for, excepting the injunctions of religion, I do not find in myself such a necessary and indissoluble sympathy to all those of my blood. I hope I do not break the fifth commandment, if I conceive I may love my friend before the nearest of my blood, even those to whom I owe the principles of life. I never yet cast a true affection on a woman ; but I have loved my friend, as I do virtue, my soul, my God. From hence, methinks, I do conceive how God loves man ; what happiness there is in the love of God. Omitting all other, there are three most mystical unions ; two natures in one person ; three persons in one nature ; one soul in two bodies. For though, indeed, they be really divided, yet are they so united, as they seem but one, and make rather a duality than two distinct souls.

SECT. VI.—There are wonders in true affection. It is a body of enigmas, mysteries, and riddles ; wherein two so become one as they both become two : I love my friend before myself, and yet, methinks, I do not love him enough. Some few months hence, my multiplied affection will make me believe I have not loved him at all. When I am from him, I am dead till I be with him. United souls are not satisfied with



embraces, but desire to be truly each other ; which being impossible, their desires are infinite, and must proceed without a possibility of satisfaction. Another misery there is in affection ; that whom we truly love like our own selves, we forget their looks, nor can our memory retain the idea of their faces : and it is no wonder, for they are ourselves, and our affection makes their looks our own. This noble affection falls not on vulgar and common constitutions ; but on such as are marked for virtue. He that can love his friend with this noble ardour will in a competent degree affect all. Now, if we can bring our affections to look beyond the body, and cast an eye upon the soul, we have found out the true object, not only of friendship, but charity : and the greatest happiness that we can bequeath the soul is that wherein we all do place our last felicity, salvation ; which, though it be not in our power to bestow, it is in our charity and pious invocations to desire, if not procure and further. I cannot contentedly frame a prayer for myself in particular, without a catalogue for my friends, nor request a happiness wherein my sociable disposition doth not desire the fellowship of my neighbour. I never hear the toll of a passing bell, though in my mirth, without my prayers and best wishes for the departing spirit. I cannot go to cure the body of my patient, but I forget my profession, and call unto God for his soul. I cannot see one say his prayers, but, instead of imitating him, I fall into supplication for him, who perhaps is no more to me than a common nature : and if God hath vouchsafed an ear to my supplications, there are surely many happy that never saw me, and enjoy the blessing of mine unknown devotions. To pray for enemies, that is, for

their salvation, is no harsh precept, but the practice of our daily and ordinary devotions. I cannot believe the story of the Italian; our bad wishes and uncharitable desires proceed no further than this life; it is the devil, and the uncharitable votes of hell, that desire our misery in the world to come.

SECT. VII.—“To do no injury nor take none” was a principle which, to my former years and impatient affections, seemed to contain enough of morality, but my more settled years, and Christian constitution, have fallen upon severer resolutions. I can hold there is no such thing as injury; that if there be, there is no such injury as revenge, and no such revenge as the contempt of an injury: that to hate another is to malign himself; that the truest way to love another is to despise ourselves. I were unjust unto mine own conscience if I should say I am at variance with anything like myself. I find there are many pieces in this one fabrick of man; this frame is raised upon a mass of antipathies: I am one methinks but as the world, wherein notwithstanding there are a swarm of distinct essences, and in them another world of contrarieties; we carry private and domestick enemies within, public and more hostile adversaries without. The devil, that did but buffet St. Paul, plays methinks at sharp with me. Let me be nothing, if within the compass of myself, I do not find the battle of Lepanto, passion against reason, reason against faith, faith against the devil, and my conscience against all. There is another man within me that’s angry with me, rebukes, commands, and dastards me. I have no conscience of marble, to resist the hammer of more heavy offences: nor yet so soft and waxen, as to take the impression of

each single peccadillo or scape of infirmity. I am of a strange belief, that it is as easy to be forgiven some sins as to commit some others. For my original sin, I hold it to be washed away in my baptism; for my actual transgressions, I compute and reckon with God but from my last repentance, sacrament, or general absolution; and therefore am not terrified with the sins or madness of my youth. I thank the goodness of God, I have no sins that want a name. I am not singular in offences; my transgressions are epidemical, and from the common breath of our corruption. For there are certain tempers of body which, matched with an humorous depravity of mind, do hatch and produce vitiosities, whose newness and monstrosity of nature admits no name; this was the temper of that lecher that carnaled with a statue, and the constitution of Nero in his spintrian recreations. For the heavens are not only fruitful in new and unheard of stars, the earth in plants and animals, but men's minds also in villany and vices. Now the dulness of my reason, and the vulgarity of my disposition, never prompted my invention nor solicited my affection unto any of these;—yet even those common and quotidian infirmities that so necessarily attend me, and do seem to be my very nature, have so dejected me, so broken the estimation that I should have otherwise of myself, that I repute myself the most abject piece of mortality. Divines prescribe a fit of sorrow to repentance: there goes indignation, anger, sorrow, hatred, into mine, passions of a contrary nature, which neither seem to suit with this action, nor my proper constitution. It is no breach of charity to ourselves to be at variance with our vices, nor to abhor that part of us, which is an

enemy to the ground of charity, our God ; wherein we do but imitate our great selves, the world, whose divided antipathies and contrary faces do yet carry a charitable regard unto the whole, by their particular discords preserving the common harmony, and keeping in fetters those powers, whose rebellions, once masters, might be the ruin of all.

SECT. viii.—I thank God, amongst those millions of vices, I do inherit and hold from Adam, I have escaped one, and that a mortal enemy to charity,—the first and father sin, not only of man, but of the devil,—pride ; a vice whose name is comprehended in a monosyllable, but in its nature not circumscribed with a world, I have escaped it in a condition that can hardly avoid it. Those petty acquisitions and reputed perfections, that advance and elevate the conceits of other men, add no feathers unto mine. I have seen a grammarian tower and plume himself over a single line in Horace, and show more pride, in the construction of one ode, than the author in the composure of the whole book. For my own part, besides the jargon and *patois* of several provinces, I understand no less than six languages ; yet I protest I have no higher conceit of myself than had our fathers before the confusion of Babel, when there was but one language in the world, and none to boast himself either linguist or critick. I have not only seen several countries, beheld the nature of their climes, the chorography of their provinces, topography of their cities, but understood their several laws, customs, and policies ; yet cannot all this persuade the dulness of my spirit unto such an opinion of myself as I behold in nimbler and conceited heads, that never looked a degree beyond their nests. I know

the names and somewhat more of all the constellations in my horizon ; yet I have seen a prating mariner, that could only name the pointers and the north-star, out talk me, and conceit himself a whole sphere above me. I know most of the plants of my country, and of those about me, yet methinks I do not know so many as when I did but know a hundred, and had scarcely ever simplified further than Cheapside. For, indeed, heads of capacity, and such as are not full with a handful or easy measure of knowledge, think they know nothing till they know all ; which being impossible, they fall upon the opinion of Socrates, and only know they know not any thing. I cannot think that Homer pined away upon the riddle of the fishermen, or that Aristotle, who understood the uncertainty of knowledge, and confessed so often the reason of man too weak for the works of nature, did ever drown himself upon the flux and reflux of Euripus. We do but learn, to-day, what our better advanced judgments will unteach to-morrow ; and Aristotle doth but instruct us, as Plato did him, that is, to confute himself. I have run through all sorts, yet find no rest in any : though our first studies and junior endeavours may style us Peripateticks, Stoicks, or Academicks, yet I perceive the wisest heads prove, at last, almost all Scepticks, and stand like Janus in the field of knowledge. I have therefore one common and authentick philosophy I learned in the schools, whereby I discourse and satisfy the reason of other men ; another more reserved, and drawn from experience, whereby I content mine own. Solomon, that complained of ignorance in the height of knowledge, hath not only humbled my conceits, but discouraged my endeavours. There is

yet another conceit that hath sometimes made me shut my books, which tells me it is a vanity to waste our days in the blind pursuit of knowledge: it is but attending a little longer, and we shall enjoy that, by instinct and infusion, which we endeavour at here by labour and inquisition. It is better to sit down in a modest ignorance, and rest contented with the natural blessing of our own reasons, than buy the uncertain knowledge of this life with sweat and vexation, which death gives every fool gratis, and is an accessory of our glorification.

SECT. IX.—I was never yet once [married], and commend their resolutions who never marry twice. Not that I disallow of second marriage; as neither in all cases of polygamy, which considering some times, and the unequal number of both sexes, may be also necessary. The whole world was made for man, but the twelfth part of man for woman. Man is the whole world, and the breath of God; woman the rib and crooked piece of man. I could be content that we might procreate like trees, without conjunction, or that there were any way to perpetuate the world without this trivial and vulgar way of coition: it is the foolishhest act a wise man commits in all his life, nor is there any thing that will more deject his cooled imagination, when he shall consider what an odd and unworthy piece of folly he hath committed. I speak not in prejudice, nor am averse from that sweet sex, but naturally amorous of all that is beautiful. I can look a whole day with delight upon a handsome picture, though it be but of an horse. It is my temper, and I like it the better, to affect all harmony; and sure there is musick, even in the beauty and the silent



note which Cupid strikes, far sweeter than the sound of an instrument. For there is a musick wherever there is a harmony, order, or proportion; and thus far we may maintain "the musick of the spheres:" for those well-ordered motions, and regular paces, though they give no sound unto the ear, yet to the understanding they strike a note most full of harmony. Whatsoever is harmonically composed delights in harmony, which makes me much distrust the symmetry of those heads which declaim against all church-musick. For myself, not only from my obedience but my particular genius I do embrace it: for even that vulgar and tavern-musick, which makes one man merry, another mad, strikes in me a deep fit of devotion, and a profound contemplation of the first composer. There is something in it of divinity more than the ear discovers: it is an hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world, and creatures of God,—such a melody to the ear, as the whole world, well understood, would afford the understanding. In brief, it is a sensible fit of that harmony which intellectually sounds in the ears of God. I will not say, with Plato, the soul is an harmony, but harmonical, and hath its nearest sympathy unto musick: thus some, whose temper of body agrees, and humours the constitution of their souls, are born poets, though indeed all are naturally inclined unto rhythm. This made Tacitus, in the very first line of his story, fall upon a verse;\* and Cicero, the worst of poets, but declaiming for a poet, falls in the very first

\* *Urbem Romam in principio reges habuere.*<sup>1</sup>—*Taciti Annales*, l. i.

<sup>1</sup> "Now kings in the beginning governed Rome."—ED.



sentence upon a perfect hexameter.\* I feel not in me those sordid and unchristian desires of my profession ; I do not secretly implore and wish for plagues, rejoice at famines, revolve ephemerides and almanacks in expectation of malignant aspects, fatal conjunctions, and eclipses. I rejoice not at unwholesome springs nor unseasonable winters : my prayer goes with the husbandman's ; I desire everything in its proper season, that neither men nor the times be out of temper. Let me be sick myself, if sometimes the malady of my patient be not a disease unto me. I desire rather to cure his infirmities than my own necessities. Where I do him no good, methinks it is scarce honest gain, though I confess 'tis but the worthy salary of our well-intended endeavours. I am not only ashamed but heartily sorry, that, besides death, there are diseases incurable ; yet not for my own sake or that they be beyond my art, but for the general cause and sake of humanity, whose common cause I apprehend as mine own. And, to speak more generally, those three noble professions which all civil commonwealths do honour, are raised upon the fall of Adam, and are not any way exempt from their infirmities. There are not only diseases incurable in physick, but cases indissolvable in law, vices incorrigible in divinity. If general councils may err, I do not see why particular courts should be infallible : their perfectest rules are raised upon the erroneous reasons of man, and the laws of one do but condemn the rules of another ; as Aristotle oftentimes the opinions of his predecessors, because,

\* In qua me non inficior mediocriter esse.<sup>1</sup>—*Cicero pro Archia Poeta.*

<sup>1</sup> "Wherein I do not deny that I am moderately——"—*Ed.*

though agreeable to reason, yet [they] were not consonant to his own rules and the logic of his proper principles. Again,—to speak nothing of the sin against the Holy Ghost, whose cure not only, but whose nature is unknown,—I can cure the gout or stone in some, sooner than divinity, pride, or avarice in others. I can cure vices by physick when they remain incurable by divinity, and they shall obey my pills when they condemn their precepts. I boast nothing, but plainly say, we all labour against our own cure; for death is the cure of all diseases. There is no *catholicon* or universal remedy I know, but this, which though nauseous to queasy stomachs, yet to prepared appetites is nectar, and a pleasant potion of immortality.

SECT. X.—FOR my conversation, it is, like the sun's, with all men, and with a friendly aspect to good and bad. Methinks there is no man bad; and the worst best, that is, while they are kept within the circle of those qualities, wherein they are good. There is no man's mind of so discordant and jarring a temper, to which a tuneable disposition may not strike a harmony. *Magnæ virtutes, nec minora vitia*; <sup>1</sup> it is the posy of the best natures, and may be inverted on the worst. There are, in the most depraved and venomous dispositions, certain pieces that remain untouched, which by an *antiperistasis* <sup>2</sup> become more excellent, or by the excellency of their antipathies are able to preserve themselves from the contagion of their enemies' vices, and persist entire beyond the general corruption. For it is

<sup>1</sup> "Great virtues and vices no less great."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "The setting opposite of a contrary." "The opposition of surrounding parts."—ED.

also thus in nature: the greatest balsams do lie enveloped in the bodies of the most powerful corrosives. I say moreover, and I ground upon experience, that poisons contain within themselves their own antidotes, and that which preserves them from the venom of themselves; without which they were not deleterious to others only, but to themselves also. But it is the corruption that I fear within me; not the contagion of commerce without me. 'Tis that unruly regiment within me, that will destroy me; 'tis I that do infect myself; the man without a navel\* yet lives in me. I feel that original canker corrode and devour me: and therefore, *Defenda me, Dios, de me!* "Lord, deliver me from myself!" is a part of my litany, and the first voice of my retired imaginations. There is no man alone, because every man is a microcosm, and carries the whole world about him. *Nunquam minus solus quam cum solus*,<sup>1</sup> though it be the apothegm of a wise man is yet true in the mouth of a fool: for indeed, though in a wilderness, a man is never alone; not only because he is with himself, and his own thoughts, but because he is with the devil, who ever consorts with our solitude, and is that unruly rebel that musters up those disordered motions which accompany our sequestered imaginations. And to speak more narrowly, there is no such thing as solitude, nor anything that can be said to be alone, and by itself, but God;—who is his own circle, and can subsist by himself; all others, besides their dissimilary and heterogeneous parts, which in a manner multiply their natures, cannot subsist

\* Adam, whom I conceive to want a navel, because he was not born of a woman. *MS. W.*

<sup>1</sup> "Never less alone than when alone."—*ED.*

without the concurrence of God, and the society of that hand which doth uphold their natures. In brief, there can be nothing truly alone, and by its self, which is not truly one, and such is only God: all others do transcend an unity, and so by consequence are many.

SECT. XI.—Now for my life, it is a miracle of thirty years, which to relate, were not a history, but a piece of poetry, and would sound to common years like a fable. For the world, I count it not an inn, but an hospital; and a place not to live, but to die in. The world that I regard is myself; it is the microcosm of my own frame that I cast mine eye on: for the other, I use it but like my globe, and turn it round sometimes for my recreation. Men that look upon my outside, pursuing only my condition and fortunes, do err in my altitude; for I am above Atlas's shoulders. The earth is a point not only in respect of the heavens above us, but of that heavenly and celestial part within us. That mass of flesh that circumscribes me limits not my mind. That surface that tells the heavens it hath an end cannot persuade me I have any. I take my circle to be above three hundred and sixty. Though the number of the ark do measure my body, it comprehendeth not my mind. Whilst I study to find how I am a microcosm, or little world, I find myself something more than the great. There is surely a piece of divinity in us; something that was before the elements, and owes no homage unto the sun. Nature tells me, I am the image of God, as well as Scripture. He that understands not thus much hath not his introduction or first lesson, and is yet to begin the alphabet of man. Let me not injure the felicity of others, if I say I am as happy as any. *Ruat cælum, fiat voluntas tua,*<sup>1</sup> salveth

<sup>1</sup> "Let heaven fall, but let Thy will be done."

all; so that, whatsoever happens, it is but what our daily prayers desire. In brief, I am content; and what should providence add more? Surely this is it we call happiness, and this do I enjoy; with this I am happy in a dream, and as content to enjoy a happiness in a fancy, as others in a more apparent truth and reality. There is surely a nearer apprehension of any thing that delights us, in our dreams, than in our waked senses. Without this I were unhappy; for my awaked judgment discontents me, ever whispering unto me that I am from my friend, but my friendly dreams in the night requite me, and make me think I am within his arms. I thank God for my happy dreams, as I do for my good rest; for there is a satisfaction in them unto reasonable desires, and such as can be content with a fit of happiness. And surely it is not a melancholy conceit to think we are all asleep in this world, and that the conceits of this life are as mere dreams, to those of the next, as the phantasms of the night, to the conceit of the day. There is an equal delusion in both; and the one doth but seem to be the emblem or picture of the other. We are somewhat more than ourselves in our sleeps; and the slumber of the body seems to be but the waking of the soul. It is the ligation of sense, but the liberty of reason; and our waking conceptions do not match the fancies of our sleeps. At my nativity, my ascendant was the watery sign of *Scorpio*. I was born in the planetary hour of *Saturn*, and I think I have a piece of that leaden planet in me. I am no way facetious, nor disposed for the mirth and galliardise of company; yet in one dream I can compose a whole comedy, behold the action, apprehend the jests, and laugh myself awake at the

conceits thereof. Were my memory as faithful as my reason is then fruitful, I would never study but in my dreams, and this time also would I choose for my devotions: but our grosser memories have then so little hold of our abstracted understandings, that they forget the story, and can only relate to our awaked souls a confused and broken tale of that which hath passed. Aristotle, who hath written a singular tract of sleep, hath not, methinks, thoroughly defined it; nor yet Galen, though he seem to have corrected it; for those *noctambulos* and night-walkers, though in their sleep, do yet enjoy the action of their senses. We must therefore say that there is something in us that is not in the jurisdiction of Morpheus; and that those abstracted and ecstasick souls do walk about in their own corpses, as spirits with the bodies they assume, wherein they seem to hear, see, and feel, though indeed the organs are destitute of sense, and their natures of those faculties that should inform them. Thus it is observed, that men sometimes, upon the hour of their departure, do speak and reason above themselves. For then the soul begins to be freed from the ligaments of the body, begins to reason like herself, and to discourse in a strain above mortality.

SECT. XII.—We term sleep a death; and yet it is waking that kills us, and destroys those spirits that are the house of life. 'Tis indeed a part of life that best expresseth death; for every man truly lives, so long as he acts his nature, or some way makes good the faculties of himself. Themistocles therefore, that slew his soldier in his sleep, was a merciful executioner: 'tis a kind of punishment the mildness of no laws hath invented; I wonder the fancy of Lucan and Seneca

did not discover it. It is that death by which we may be literally said to die daily ; a death which Adam died before his mortality ; a death whereby we live a middle and moderating point between life and death. In fine, so like death, I dare not trust it without my prayers, and an half adieu unto the world, and take my farewell in a colloquy with God :—

The night is come, like to the day ;  
Depart not thou, great God, away.  
Let not my sins, black as the night,  
Eclipse the lustre of thy light.  
Keep still in my horizon ; for to me  
The sun makes not the day, but thee.  
Thou whose nature cannot sleep,  
On my temples sentry keep ;  
Guard me 'gainst those watchful foes,  
Whose eyes are open while mine close.  
Let no dreams my head infest,  
But such as Jacob's temples blest.  
While I do rest, my soul advance :  
Make my sleep a holy trance :  
That I may, my rest being wrought,  
Awake into some holy thought  
And with as active vigour run  
My course as doth the nimble sun.  
Sleep is a death ;—O make me try  
By sleeping, what it is to die !  
And as gently lay my head  
On my grave, as now my bed.  
Howe'er I rest, great God, let me  
Awake again at last with thee.  
And thus assur'd, behold I lie  
Securely, or to wake or die.  
These are my drowsy days ; in vain  
I do now wake to sleep again :  
O come that hour, when I shall never  
Sleep again, but wake for ever !

This is the dormitive I take to bedward ; I need no



other *laudanum* than this to make me sleep ; after which I close mine eyes in security, content to take my leave of the sun, and sleep unto the resurrection.

SECT. XIII.—The method I should use in distributive justice, I often observe in commutative ; and keep a geometrical proportion in both, whereby becoming equable to others, I become unjust to myself, and supererogate in that common principle, “Do unto others as thou wouldst be done unto thyself.” I was not born unto riches, neither is it, I think, my star to be wealthy ; or if it were, the freedom of my mind, and frankness of my disposition, were able to contradict and cross my fates ; for to me avarice seems not so much a vice, as a deplorable piece of madness ; to conceive ourselves urinals, or be persuaded that we are dead, is not so ridiculous, nor so many degrees beyond the power of hellebore, as this. The opinions of theory, and positions of men, are not so void of reason, as their practised conclusions. Some have held that snow is black, that the earth moves, that the soul is air, fire, water ; but all this is philosophy : and there is no delirium, if we do but speculate the folly and indisputable dotage of avarice. To that subterraneous idol, and God of the earth, I do confess I am an atheist. I cannot persuade myself to honour that the world adores ; whatsoever virtue its prepared substance may have within my body, it hath no influence nor operation without. I would not entertain a base design, or an action that should call me villain, for the Indies ; and for this only do I love and honour my own soul, and have methinks two arms too few to embrace myself. Aristotle is too severe, that will not allow us to be truly liberal without wealth, and the

bountiful hand of fortune ; if this be true, I must confess I am charitable only in my liberal intentions, and bountiful well wishes. But if the example of the mite be not only an act of wonder, but an example of the noblest charity, surely poor men may also build hospitals, and the rich alone have not erected cathedrals. I have a private method which others observe not ; I take the opportunity of myself to do good ; I borrow occasion of charity from my own necessities, and supply the wants of others, when I am in most need myself : for it is an honest stratagem to take advantage of ourselves, and so to husband the acts of virtue, that, where they are defective in one circumstance, they may repay their want, and multiply their goodness in another. I have not Peru in my desires, but a competence and ability to perform those good works to which [the Almighty] hath inclined my nature. He is rich who hath enough to be charitable ; and it is hard to be so poor that a noble mind may not find a way to this piece of goodness. “He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord :” there is more rhetoric in that one sentence than in a library of sermons. And indeed, if those sentences were understood by the reader with the same emphasis as they are delivered by the author, we needed not those volumes of instructions, but might be honest by an epitome. Upon this motive only I cannot behold a beggar without relieving his necessities with my purse, or his soul with my prayers. These scenical and accidental differences between us cannot make me forget that common and untoucht part of us both : there is under these centoes and miserable outsides, those mutilate and semi bodies, a soul of the same alloy with our own, whose

genealogy is God as well as ours, and in as fair a way to salvation as ourselves. Statists that labour to contrive a commonwealth without poverty take away the object of our charity ; not understanding only the commonwealth of a christian, but forgetting the prophecy of Christ.\*

SECT. XIV.—Now, there is another part of charity, which is the basis and pillar of this, and that is the love of God, for whom we love our neighbour ; for this I think charity, to love God for himself, and our neighbour for God. All that is truly amiable is God, or as it were a divided piece of him, that retains a reflex or shadow of himself. Nor is it strange that we should place affection on that which is invisible : all that we truly love is thus. What we adore under affection of our senses deserves not the honour of so pure a title. Thus we adore virtue, though to the eyes of sense she be invisible. Thus that part of our noble friends that we love is not that part that we embrace, but that insensible part that our arms cannot embrace. God being all goodness, can love nothing but himself ; he loves us for that part which is as it were himself, and the traduction of his Holy Spirit. Let us call to assize the loves of our parents, the affections of our wives and children, and they are all dumb shows and dreams, without reality, truth, or constancy. For first there is a strong bond of affection between us and our parents ; yet how easily dissolved ! We betake ourselves to a woman, forgetting our mother in a wife, and the womb that bare us in that which shall bear our image. This woman blessing us with children, our affection leaves the level it held before, and sinks from our bed unto

\* "The poor ye shall have always with you."—*MS. W.*

our issue and picture of posterity : where affection holds no steady mansion ; they growing up in years, desire our ends ; or, applying themselves to a woman, take a lawful way to love another better than ourselves. Thus I perceive a man may be buried alive, and behold his grave in his own issue.

I conclude therefore, and say, there is no happiness under (or, as Copernicus \* will have it, above) the sun ; nor any *crambo*<sup>1</sup> in that repeated verity and burthen of all the wisdom of Solomon ; “All is vanity and vexation of spirit” ; there is no felicity in that the world adores. Aristotle, whilst he labours to refute the *ideas* of Plato, falls upon one himself : for his *summum bonum*<sup>2</sup> is a chimæra ; and there is no such thing as his felicity. That wherein God himself is happy, the holy angels are happy, in whose defect the devils are unhappy ;—that dare I call happiness : whatsoever conduceth unto this, may, with an easy metaphor, deserve that name ; whatsoever else the world terms happiness is, to me, a story out of Pliny, an apparition or neat delusion, wherein there is no more of happiness than the name. Bless mein this life with but the peace of my conscience, command of my affections, the love of thyself and my dearest friends, and I shall be happy enough to pity Cæsar ! These are, O Lord, the humble desires of my most reasonable ambition, and all I dare call happiness on earth : wherein I set no rule or limit to thy hand or providence ; dispose of me according to the wisdom of thy pleasure. Thy will be done, though in my own undoing.

\* Who holds that the sun is the centre of the world.—*MS. W.*

<sup>1</sup> “ Repetition.”—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> “ Highest good.”



# HYDRIOTAPHIA

URN BURIAL ; OR, A DISCOURSE OF THE SEPULCHRAL  
URNS, LATELY FOUND IN NORFOLK





## THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY

TO MY WORTHY AND HONOURED FRIEND,  
THOMAS LE GROS, OF CROSTWICK, ESQUIRE.

WHEN the funeral pyre was out, and the last valediction over, men took a lasting adieu of their interred friends, little expecting the curiosity of future ages should comment upon their ashes; and, having no old experience of the duration of their relicks, held no opinion of such after-considerations.

But who knows the fate of his bones, or how often he is to be buried? Who hath the oracle of his ashes, or whither they are to be scattered? The relicks of many lie like the ruins of Pompey's,\* in all parts of the earth; and when they arrive at your hands these may seem to have wandered far, who, in a direct and meridian travel,† have but a few miles of known earth between yourself and the pole.

That the bones of Theseus should be seen again in Athens‡ was not beyond conjecture and hopeful expectation: but that these should arise so opportunely

\* *Pompeios juvenes Asia atque Europa, sed ipsum terra tegit Libyos.*<sup>1</sup>

† Little directly but sea, between your house and Greenland.

‡ Brought back by Cimon.—*Plutarch.*

<sup>1</sup> "In Asia and Europe are the graves of Pompey's warriors, but he himself lies in Libyan soil."—ED.

to serve yourself was an hit of fate, and honour beyond prediction.

We cannot but wish these urns might have the effect of theatrical vessels and great Hippodrome urns\* in Rome, to resound the acclamations and honour due unto you. But these are sad and sepulchral pitchers, which have no joyful voices; silently expressing old mortality, the ruins of forgotten times, and can only speak with life, how long in this corruptible frame some parts may be uncorrupted; yet able to outlast bones long unborn, and noblest pile among us.†

We present not these as any strange sight or spectacle unknown to your eyes, who have beheld the best of urns and noblest variety of ashes; who are yourself no slender master of antiquities, and can daily command the view of so many imperial faces; which raiseth your thoughts unto old things and consideration of times before you, when even living men were antiquities; when the living might exceed the dead, and to depart this world could not be properly said to go unto the greater number.‡ And so run up your thoughts upon the ancient of days, the antiquary's truest object, unto whom the eldest parcels are young, and earth itself an infant, and without Egyptian§ account makes but small noise in thousands.

We were hinted by the occasion, not caught the opportunity to write of old things, or intrude upon the

\* The great urns in the Hippodrome at Rome, conceived to resound the voices of people at their shows.

† Worthily possessed by that true gentleman, Sir Horatio Townshend, my honoured friend.

‡ *Abit ad plures*.<sup>1</sup>

§ Which makes the world so many years old.

<sup>1</sup> "He departed to the majority."—ED.

antiquary. We are coldly drawn unto discourses of antiquities, who have scarce time before us to comprehend new things, or make out learned novelties. But seeing they arose, as they lay almost in silence among us, at least in short account suddenly passed over, we were very unwilling they should die again, and be buried twice among us.

Beside, to preserve the living, and make the dead to live, to keep men out of their urns, and discourse of human fragments in them, is not impertinent unto our profession; whose study is life and death, who daily behold examples of mortality, and of all men least need artificial *mementos*, or coffins by our bedside, to mind us of our graves.

'Tis time to observe occurrences, and let nothing remarkable escape us: the supinity of elder days hath left so much in silence, or time hath so martyred the records, that the most industrious heads\* do find no easy work to erect a new Britannia.

'Tis opportune to look back upon old times, and contemplate our forefathers. Great examples grow thin, and to be fetched from the passed world. Simplicity flies away, and iniquity comes at long strides upon us. We have enough to do to make up ourselves from present and passed times, and the whole stage of things scarce serveth for our instruction. A complete piece of virtue must be made from the Centos of all ages, as all the beauties of Greece could make but one handsome Venus.

When the bones of King Arthur were digged up,†

\* Wherein Mr. Dugdale hath excellently well endcavoured, and worthy to be countenanced by ingenuous and noble persons.

† In the time of Henry the Second.—*Camden*.

the old race might think they beheld therein some originals of themselves ; unto these of our urns none here can pretend relation, and can only behold the relicks of those persons who, in their life giving the laws unto their predecessors, after long obscurity, now lie at their mercies. But, remembering the early civility they brought upon these countries, and forgetting long-passed mischiefs, we mercifully preserve their bones, and piss not upon their ashes.

In the offer of these antiquities we drive not at ancient families, so long outlasted by them. We are far from erecting your worth upon the pillars of your forefathers, whose merits you illustrate. We honour your old virtues, conformable unto times before you, which are the noblest armoury. And, having long experience of your friendly conversation, void of empty formality, full of freedom, constant and generous honesty, I look upon you as a gem of the old rock,\* and must profess myself even to urn and ashes,

Your ever faithful Friend and Servant,

THOMAS BROWNE.

*Norwich, May 1st.*

\* *Adamas de rupe veteri præstantissimus.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "A brilliant gem of the old rock."—ED.

# HYDRIOTAPHIA

## CHAPTER I

IN the deep discovery of the subterranean world, a shallow part would satisfy some enquirers ; who, if two or three yards were open about the surface, would not care to rake the bowels of Potosi,\* and regions towards the centre. Nature hath furnished one part of the earth, and man another. The treasures of time lie high, in urns, coins, and monuments, scarce below the roots of some vegetables. Time hath endless rarities, and shows of all varieties ; which reveals old things in heaven, makes new discoveries in earth, and even earth itself a discovery. That great antiquity America lay buried for thousands of years, and a large part of the earth is still in the urn unto us.

Though if Adam were made out of an extract of the earth, all parts might challenge a restitution, yet few have returned their bones far lower than they might receive them ; not affecting the graves of giants, under hilly and heavy coverings, but content with less than their own depth, have wished their bones might lie soft, and the earth be light upon them. Even such as hope to rise again, would not be content with central

\* The rich mountain of Peru.

interment, or so desperately to place their relicks as to lie beyond discovery ; and in no way to be seen again ; which happy contrivance hath made communication with our forefathers, and left unto our view some parts, which they never beheld themselves.

Though earth hath engrossed the name, yet water hath proved the smartest grave ; which in forty days swallowed almost mankind, and the living creation ; fishes not wholly escaping, except the salt ocean were handsomely contempered by a mixture of the fresh element.

Many have taken voluminous pains to determine the state of the soul upon disunion ; but men have been most phantastical in the singular contrivances of their corporal dissolution : whilst the soberest nations have rested in two ways, of simple inhumation and burning.

That carnal interment or burying was of the elder date, the old examples of Abraham and the patriarchs are sufficient to illustrate ; and were without competition, if it could be made out that Adam was buried near Damascus, or Mount Calvary, according to some tradition. God himself, that buried but one, was pleased to make choice of this way, collectible from Scripture expression, and the hot contest between Satan and the archangel, about discovering the body of Moses. But the practice of burning was also of great antiquity, and of no slender extent. For (not to derive the same from Hercules) noble descriptions there are hereof in the Grecian funerals of Homer, in the formal obsequies of Patroclus and Achilles ; and somewhat elder in the Theban war, and solemn combustion of Meneceus, and Archemorus, contemporary unto Jair the eighth judge of Israel. Confirmable also

among the Trojans, from the funeral pyre of Hector, burnt before the gates of Troy : and the burning of Penthesilea the Amazonian queen :\* and long continuance of that practice, in the inward countries of Asia ; while as low as the reign of Julian, we find that the king of Chionia † burnt the body of his son, and interred the ashes in a silver urn.

The same practice extended also far west ; ‡ and, besides Herulians, Getes, and Thracians, was in use with most of the Celtæ, Sarmatians, Germans, Gauls, Danes, Swedes, Norwegians ; not to omit some use thereof among Carthaginians and Americans. Of greater antiquity among the Romans than most opinion, or Pliny seems to allow : for (beside the old table laws of burning or burying within the city, § of making the funeral fire with planed wood, or quenching the fire with wine), Manlius the consul burnt the body of his son : Numa, by special clause of his will, was not burnt but buried ; and Remus was solemnly burned, according to the description of Ovid. ||

Cornelius Sylla was not the first whose body was

\* *Q. Calaber*, lib. 1.

† Gumbrates, king of *Chionia*, a country near *Persia*.—*Am-mianus Marcellinus*.

‡ *Arnold*. *Montan. not.* in *Cæs. Commentar.* *L. Gyraldus*. *Kirk-mannus*.

§ *Tabul.* part i. *de jure sacro*. *Hominem mortuum in urbe ne sepelito, neve urito*, tom. 2. *Rogum ascia ne polito*, tom. 4. *Item Vigeneri Annotat. in Livium, et Alex. cum Tiraquello*. *Roscinus cum Dempstero*.<sup>1</sup>

|| *Ultimo prolata subdita flamma rogo*. *De Fast.* lib. iv. *cum Car. Neapol. Anaptyxi*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Bury not nor burn a dead man in the city." "Smooth not the wood of the funeral pile with an axe."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "At the last the flame was set to his funeral pile."—ED.



burned in Rome, but the first of the Cornelian family; which, being indifferently, not frequently used before; from that time spread, and became the prevalent practice. Not totally pursued in the highest run of cremation; for when even crows were funerally burnt, Poppæa the wife of Nero found a peculiar grave interment. Now as all customs were founded upon some bottom of reason, so there wanted not grounds for this; according to several apprehensions of the most rational dissolution. Some being of the opinion of Thales, that water was the original of all things, thought it most equal to submit unto the principle of putrefaction, and conclude in a moist relentment. Others conceived it most natural to end in fire, as due unto the master principle in the composition, according to the doctrine of Heraclitus; and therefore heaped up large piles, more actively to waft them toward that element, whereby they also declined a visible degeneration into worms, and left a lasting parcel of their composition.

Some apprehended a purifying virtue in fire, refining the grosser commixture, and firing out the æthereal particles so deeply immersed in it. And such as by tradition or rational conjecture held any hint of the final pyre of all things; or that this element at last must be too hard for all the rest; might conceive most naturally of the fiery dissolution. Others pretending no natural grounds, politickly declined the malice of enemies upon their buried bodies. Which consideration led Sylla unto this practice; who having thus served the body of Marius, could not but fear a retaliation upon his own; entertained after in the civil wars, and revengeful contentions of Rome.

But as many nations embraced, and many left it

indifferent, so others too much affected, or strictly declined this practice. The Indian Brachmans seemed too great friends unto fire, who burnt themselves alive, and thought it the noblest way to end their days in fire; according to the expression of the Indian, burning himself at Athens,\* in his last words upon the pyre unto the amazed spectators, thus I make myself immortal.

But the Chaldeans, the great idolaters of fire, abhorred the burning of their carcasses, as a pollution of that deity. The Persian magi declined it upon the like scruple, and being only solicitous about their bones, exposed their flesh to the prey of birds and dogs. And the Persees now in India, which expose their bodies unto vultures, and endure not so much as *feretra* or biers of wood, the proper fuel of fire, are led on with such niceties. But whether the ancient Germans, who burned their dead, held any such fear to pollute their deity of Herthus, or the earth, we have no authentic conjecture.

The Egyptians were afraid of fire, not as a deity, but a devouring element, mercilessly consuming their bodies, and leaving too little of them; and therefore by precious embalmments, depositure in dry earths, or handsome inclosure in glasses, contrived the notablest ways of integral conservation. And from such Egyptian scruples, imbibed by Pythagoras, it may be conjectured that Numa and the Pythagorical sect first waved the fiery solution.

The Scythians, who swore by wind and sword, that is, by life and death, were so far from burning their

\* And therefore the inscription of his tomb was made accordingly.—*Nic. Damasc.*

bodies, that they declined all interment, and made their graves in the air : and the Ichthyophagi, or fish-eating nations about Egypt, affected the sea for their grave ; thereby declining visible corruption, and restoring the debt of their bodies. Whereas the old heroes, in Homer, dreaded nothing more than water or drowning ; probably upon the old opinion of the fiery substance of the soul, only extinguishable by that element ; and therefore the poet emphatically implieth the total destruction in this kind of death, which happened to Ajax Oileus.\*

The old Balearians† had a peculiar mode, for they used great urns and much wood, but no fire in their burials, while they bruised the flesh and bones of the dead, crowded them into urns, and laid heaps of wood upon them. And the Chinese‡ without cremation or urnal interment of their bodies, make use of trees and much burning, while they plant a pine-tree by their grave, and burn great numbers of printed draughts of slaves and horses over it, civilly content with their companies *in effigy*, which barbarous nations exact unto reality.

Christians abhorred this way of obsequies, and though they sticked not to give their bodies to be burnt in their lives, detested that mode after death ; affecting rather a depositure than absumption, and properly submitting unto the sentence of God, to return not unto ashes but unto dust again, conformable unto the practice of the patriarchs, the interment of our Saviour, of Peter,

\* Which *Magius* reads ἐξαπόλωλε.<sup>1</sup>

† *Diodorus Siculus*.

‡ *Ramusius* in *Navigat*.

<sup>1</sup> "Was utterly destroyed."—Ed.

Paul, and the ancient martyrs. And so far at last declining promiscuous interment with Pagans, that some have suffered ecclesiastical censures,\* for making no scruple thereof.

The Musselman believers will never admit this fiery resolution. For they hold a present trial from their black and white angels in the grave; which they must have made so hollow, that they may rise upon their knees.

The Jewish nation, though they entertained the old way of inhumation, yet sometimes admitted this practice. For the men of Jabesh burnt the body of Saul; and by no prohibited practice, to avoid contagion or pollution, in time of pestilence, burnt the bodies of their friends.† And when they burnt not their dead bodies, yet sometimes used great burnings near and about them, deducible from the expressions concerning Jehoram, Zedechias, and the sumptuous pyre of Asa. And were so little averse from Pagan burning, that the Jews lamenting the death of Cæsar their friend, and revenger on Pompey, frequented the place where his body was burnt for many nights together.‡ And as they raised noble monuments and mausoleums for their own nation, § so they were not scrupulous in erecting some for others, according to the practice of Daniel, who left that lasting sepulchral pile in Ecbatana for the Median and Persian kings.||

\* *Martialis* the Bishop.—*Cyprian*.

† *Amos* vi. 10.

‡ *Sueton. in vita Jul. Cæs.*

§ As that magnificent sepulchral monument erected by *Simon*,  
1 *Macc.* xiii.

|| *Κατασκεύασμα δαυμασιωζ πεποιημένον*,<sup>1</sup> whereof a Jewish priest had always the custody, unto Josephus his days.—*Jos. Antiq.* lib. x.

<sup>1</sup> “An erection wondrously fashioned.”—*ED.*

But even in times of subjection and hottest use, they conformed not unto the Roman practice of burning ; whereby the prophecy was secured concerning the body of Christ, that it should not see corruption, or a bone should not be broken ; which we believe was also providentially prevented, from the soldier's spear and nails that passed by the little bones both in his hands and feet ; not of ordinary contrivance, that it should not corrupt on the cross, according to the laws of Roman crucifixion, or an hair of his head perish, though observable in Jewish customs, to cut the hairs of malefactors.

Nor in their long cohabitation with Egyptians, crept into a custom of their exact embalming, wherein deeply slashing the muscles, and taking out the brains and entrails, they had broken the subject of so entire a resurrection, nor fully answered the types of Enoch, Elijah, or Jonah, which yet to prevent or restore, was of equal facility unto that rising power, able to break the fasciations and bands of death, to get clear out of the cerecloth, and an hundred pounds of ointment, and out of the sepulchre before the stone was rolled from it.

But though they embraced not this practice of burning, yet entertained they many ceremonies agreeable unto Greek and Roman obsequies. And he that observeth their funeral feasts, their lamentations at the grave, their music, and weeping mourners ; how they closed the eyes of their friends, how they washed, anointed, and kissed the dead ; may easily conclude these were not mere Pagan civilities. But whether that mournful burthen, and treble calling out after Absalom,\* had any reference unto the last conclamation,

\* 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

and triple valediction, used by other nations, we hold but a wavering conjecture.

Civilians make sepulture but of the law of nations, others do naturally found it and discover it also in animals. They that are so thick-skinned as still to credit the story of the Phoenix, may say something for animal burning. More serious conjectures find some examples of sepulture in elephants, cranes, the sepulchral cells of pismires, and practice of bees,—which civil society carrieth out their dead, and hath exequies, if not interments.

## CHAPTER II

THE solemnities, ceremonies, rites of their cremation or interment, so solemnly delivered by authors, we shall not disparage our reader to repeat. Only the last and lasting part in their urns, collected bones and ashes, we cannot wholly omit or decline that subject, which occasion lately presented, in some discovered among us.

In a field of Old Walsingham, not many months past, were digged up between forty and fifty urns, deposited in a dry and sandy soil, not a yard deep, not far from one another.—Not all strictly of one figure, but most answering these described : some containing two pounds of bones, distinguishable in skulls, ribs, jaws, thigh bones, and teeth, with fresh impressions of their combustion ; besides the extraneous substances, like pieces of small boxes, or combs handsomely wrought,

handles of small brass instruments, brazen nippers, and in one some kind of opal.\*

Near the same plot of ground, for about six yards compass, were digged up coals and incinerated substances, which begat conjecture that this was the *ustrina* or place of burning their bodies, or some sacrificing place unto the *manes*,<sup>1</sup> which was properly below the surface of the ground, as the *æra*<sup>2</sup> and altars unto the gods and heroes above it.

That these were the urns of the Romans from the common custom and place where they were found, is no obscure conjecture, not far from a Roman garrison, and but five miles from Brancaster, set down by ancient record under the name of Branodunum. And where the adjoining town, containing seven parishes, in no very different sound, but Saxon termination, still retains the name of Burnham, which being an early station, it is not improbable the neighbour parts were filled with habitations, either of Romans themselves, or Britons Romanized, which observed the Roman customs.

Nor is it improbable, that the Romans early possessed this country. For though we meet not with such strict particulars of these parts before the new institution of Constantine and military charge of the count of the Saxon shore, and that about the Saxon invasions, the Dalmatian horsemen were in the garrison of Brancaster; yet in the time of Claudius, Vespasian, and Severus, we find no less than three legions dispersed through the province of Britain. And as high as the reign of Claudius a great overthrow was given unto the Icenî, by the Roman lieutenant Ostorius.

\* In one sent me by my worthy friend, Dr. Thomas Witherly of Walsingham.

<sup>1</sup> "Spirits of the dead."—ED.      <sup>2</sup> "Bronze figures."—ED.



Not long after, the country was so molested, that, in hope of a better state, Prasutagus bequeathed his kingdom unto Nero and his daughters; and Boadicea, his queen, fought the last decisive battle with Paulinus. After which time, the conquest of Agricola, the lieutenant of Vespasian, probable it is, they wholly possessed this country; ordering it into garrisons or habitations best suitable with their securities. And so some Roman habitations not improbable in these parts, as high as the time of Vespasian, where the Saxons after seated, in whose thin-filled maps we yet find the name of Walsingham. Now if the Iceni were but Gammadims, Anconians, or men that lived in an angle, wedge, or elbow of Britain, according to the original etymology, this country will challenge the emphatical appellation, as most properly making the elbow or *iken* of Icenia.

That Britain was notably populous is undeniable, from that expression of Cæsar.\* That the Romans themselves were early in no small numbers (seventy thousand, with their associates), slain by Boadicea, affords a sure account. And though many Roman habitations are now unknown, yet some, by old works, rampiers, coins, and urns do testify their possessions. Some urns have been found at Castor, some also about Southcreek, and, not many years past, no less than ten in a field at Buxton,† not near any recorded garrison.

\* *Hominum infinita multitudo est, creberrimaque; ædificia fere Gallicis consimilia.*<sup>1</sup>—*Cæs. de Bello Gal.* l. v.

† In the ground of my worthy friend Robert Jegon, Esq.; wherein some things contained were preserved by the most worthy Sir William Paston, Bart.

<sup>1</sup> "There is an infinite multitude of inhabitants clustering very close together: the buildings are in general similar to those in Gaul."—ED.

Nor is it strange to find Roman coins of copper and silver among us ; of Vespasian, Trajan, Adrian, Commodus, Antoninus, Severus, &c. ; but the greater number of Dioclesian, Constantine, Constans, Valens, with many of Victorinus Posthumius, Tetricus, and the thirty tyrants in the reign of Gallienus ; and some as high as Adrianus have been found about Thetford, or Sitomagus, mentioned in the *Itinerary* of Antoninus, as the way from Venta or Castor unto London.\* But the most frequent discovery is made at the two Castors by Norwich and Yarmouth,† at Burghcastle, and Brancaster.‡

Besides the Norman, Saxon, and Danish pieces of Cuthred, Canutus, William, Matilda,§ and others, some British coins of gold have been dispersedly found, and no small number of silver pieces near Norwich,|| with a rude head upon the obverse, and an ill-formed horse on the reverse, with inscriptions  *Ic. Duro. T.* ; whether implying Iceni, Durotriges, Tascia, or Trinobantes, we leave to higher conjecture. Vulgar chrono-

\* From Castor to Thetford the Romans accounted thirty-two miles, and from thence observed not our common road to London, but passed by *Combretonium ad Ansam, Canonium, Casaromagus, &c.*, by Bretenham, Coggeshall, Chelmsford, Brentwood, &c.

† Most at Castor by Yarmouth, found in a place called East-bloudy-burgh Furlong, belonging to Mr. Thomas Wood, a person of civility, industry, and knowledge in this way, who hath made observation of remarkable things about him, and from whom we have received divers silver and copper coins.

‡ Belonging to that noble gentleman, and true example of worth, Sir Ralph Hare, Bart., my honoured friend.

§ A piece of Maud, the empress, said to be found in Buckenham Castle, with this inscription,—*Elle n'a elle.*

|| At Thorpe.

logy will have Norwich Castle as old as Julius Cæsar; but his distance from these parts, and its gothick form of structure, abridgeth such antiquity. The British coins afford conjecture of early habitation in these parts, though the city of Norwich arose from the ruins of Venta; and though, perhaps, not without some habitation before, was enlarged, builded, and nominated by the Saxons. In what bulk or populosity it stood in the old East-Angle monarchy tradition and history are silent. Considerable it was in the Danish eruptions, when Sueno burnt Thetford and Norwich,\* and Ulfketel, the governor, was able to make some resistance, and after endeavoured to burn the Danish navy.

How the Romans left so many coins in countries of their conquests seems of hard resolution; except we consider how they buried them under ground when, upon barbarous invasions, they were fain to desert their habitations in most part of their empire, and the strictness of their laws forbidding to transfer them to any other uses: wherein the Spartans† were singular, who, to make their copper money useless, contempered it with vinegar. That the Britons left any, some wonder, since their money was iron and iron rings before Cæsar; and those of after-stamp by permission, and but small in bulk and bigness. That so few of the Saxons remain, because, overcome by succeeding conquerors upon the place, their coins, by degrees, passed into other stamps and the marks of after-ages.

Than the time of these urns deposited, or precise antiquity of these relicks, nothing of more uncertainty; for since the lieutenant of Claudius seems to have made

\* *Brampton Abbas Journallensis.*

† *Plut. in vita Lycurg.*

the first progress into these parts, since Boadicea was overthrown by the forces of Nero, and Agricola put a full end to these conquests, it is not probable the country was fully garrisoned or planted before ; and, therefore, however these urns might be of later date, not likely of higher antiquity.

And the succeeding emperors desisted not from their conquests in these and other parts, as testified by history and medal-inscription yet extant : the province of Britain, in so divided a distance from Rome, beholding the faces of many imperial persons, and in large account ; no fewer than Cæsar, Claudius, Britannicus, Vespasian, Titus, Adrian, Severus, Commodus, Geta, and Caracalla.

A great obscurity herein, because no medal or emperor's coin enclosed, which might denote the date of their interments ; observable in many urns, and found in those of Spitalfields, by London,\* which contained the coins of Claudius, Vespasian, Commodus, Antoninus, attended with lacrymatories, lamps, bottles of liquor, and other appurtenances of affectionate superstition, which in these rural interments were wanting.

Some uncertainty there is from the period or term of burning, or the cessation of that practice. Macrobius affirmeth it was disused in his days ; but most agree, though without authentic record, that it ceased with the Antonini,—most safely to be understood after the reign of those emperors which assumed the name of Antoninus, extending unto Heliogabalus. Not strictly after Marcus ; for about fifty years later, we find the magnificent burning and consecration of Severus ; and, if we so fix this period or cessation, these urns will challenge above thirteen hundred years.

\* *Stowe's Survey of London.*

But whether this practice was only then left by emperors and great persons, or generally about Rome, and not in other provinces, we hold no authentic account; for after Tertullian, in the days of Minucius, it was obviously objected upon Christians, that they condemned the practice of burning.\* And we find a passage in Sidonius,† which asserteth that practice in France unto a lower account. And, perhaps, not fully disused till Christianity fully established, which gave the final extinction to these sepulchral bonfires.

Whether they were the bones of men, or women, or children, no authentic decision from ancient custom in distinct places of burial. Although not improbably conjectured that the double sepulture, or burying-place of Abraham,‡ had in it such intention. But from exility of bones, thinness of skulls, smallness of teeth, ribs, and thigh bones, not improbable that many thereof were persons of minor age, or women. Confirmable also from things contained in them. In most were found substances resembling combs, plates like boxes, fastened with iron pins, and handsomely overwrought like the necks or bridges of musical instruments; long brass plates overwrought like the handles of neat implements; brazen nippers, to pull away hair; and in one a kind of opal, yet maintaining a bluish colour.

Now that they accustomed to burn or bury with them, things wherein they excelled, delighted, or which were dear unto them, either as farewells unto all pleasure, or vain apprehension that they might use

\* *Execrantur rogos, et damnant ignium sepulturam.*<sup>1</sup>—*Min. in Oct.*    † *Sidon. Apollinaris.*    ‡ *Gen. xxiii. 4.*

<sup>1</sup> "They curse funeral piles and condemn burial by fire."—ED.

them in the other world, is testified by all antiquity, observable from the gem or beryl ring upon the finger of Cynthia, the mistress of Propertius, when after her funeral pyre her ghost appeared unto him; and notably illustrated from the contents of that Roman urn preserved by Cardinal Farnese,\* wherein besides great number of gems with heads of gods and goddesses, were found an ape of agath, a grasshopper, an elephant of amber, a crystal ball, three glasses, two spoons, and six nuts of crystal; and beyond the content of urns, in the monument of Childerick the first,† and fourth king from Pharamond, casually discovered three years past at Tournay, restoring unto the world much gold richly adorning his sword, two hundred rubies, many hundred imperial coins, three hundred golden bees, the bones and horse-shoes of his horse interred with him, according to the barbarous magnificence of those days in their sepulchral obsequies. Although, if we steer by the conjecture of many and septuagint expression, some trace thereof may be found even with the ancient Hebrews, not only from the sepulchral treasure of David, but the circumcision knives which Joshua also buried.

Some men, considering the contents of these urns, lasting pieces and toys included in them, and the custom of burning with many other nations, might somewhat doubt whether all urns found among us, were properly Roman relicks, or some not belonging unto our British, Saxon, or Danish forefathers.

In the form of burial among the ancient Britons, the large discourses of Cæsar, Tacitus, and Strabo are

\* *Vigeneri Annot. in 4 Liv.*

† *Chifflet. in Anast. Childer.*

silent. For the discovery whereof, with other particulars, we much deplore the loss of that letter which Cicero expected or received from his brother Quintus, as a resolution of British customs; or the account which might have been made by Scribonius Largus, the physician, accompanying the Emperor Claudius, who might have also discovered that frugal bit of the old Britons,\* which in the bigness of a bean could satisfy their thirst and hunger.

But that the Druids and ruling priests used to burn and bury, is expressed by Pomponius; that Bellinus, the brother of Brennus, and king of the Britons, was burnt, is acknowledged by Polydorus, as also by Amandus Zierexensis in *Historia*, and Pineda in his *Universa Historia* (Spanish). That they held that practice in Gallia, Cæsar expressly delivereth. Whether the Britons (probably descended from them, of like religion, language, and manners) did not sometimes make use of burning, or whether at least such as were after civilized unto the Roman life and manners, conformed not unto this practice, we have no historical assertion or denial. But since, from the account of Tacitus, the Romans early wrought so much civility upon the British stock, that they brought them to build temples, to wear the gown, and study the Roman laws and language, that they conformed also unto their religious rites and customs in burials, seems no improbable conjecture.

That burning the dead was used in Sarmatia is affirmed by Gaguinus; that the Sueons and Gothlanders used to burn their princes and great persons, is delivered by Saxo and Olaus; that this was the old

\* *Dionis excerpta per Xiphilin. in Severo.*



German practice, is also asserted by Tacitus. And though we are bare in historical particulars of such obsequies in this island, or that the Saxons, Jutes, and Angles burnt their dead, yet came they from parts where 'twas of ancient practice; the Germans using it, from whom they were descended. And even in Jutland and Sleswick in Anglia Cymbrica, urns with bones were found not many years before us.

But the Danish and northern nations have raised an era or point of compute from their custom of burning their dead :\* some deriving it from Unguinus, some from Frotho the great, who ordained by law, that princes and chief commanders should be committed unto the fire, though the common sort had the common grave interment. So Starkatterus, that old hero, was burnt, and Ringo royally burnt the body of Harold the king slain by him.

What time this custom generally expired in that nation, we discern no assured period; whether it ceased before Christianity, or upon their conversion, by Ausgurius the Gaul, in the time of Ludovicus Pius the son of Charles the Great, according to good computes; or whether it might not be used by some persons, while for an hundred and eighty years Paganism and Christianity were promiscuously embraced among them, there is no assured conclusion. About which times the Danes were busy in England, and particularly infested this county; where many castles and strongholds were built by them, or against them, and great number of names and families still derived from them. But since this custom was probably disused before their invasion or conquest, and

\* *Roisold, Brendetyde. Ild tyde.*

the Romans confessedly practised the same since their possession of this island, the most assured account will fall upon the Romans, or Britons Romanized.

However, certain it is, that urns conceived of no Roman original, are often digged up both in Norway and Denmark, handsomely described, and graphically represented by the learned physician Wormius.\* And in some parts of Denmark in no ordinary number, as stands delivered by authors exactly describing those countries.† And they contained not only bones, but many other substances in them, as knives, pieces of iron, brass, and wood, and one of Norway a brass gilded jew's-harp.

Nor were they confused or careless in disposing the noblest sort, while they placed large stones in circle about the urns or bodies which they interred : somewhat answerable unto the monument of Rollrich stones in England,‡ or sepulchral monument probably erected by Rollo, who after conquered Normandy ; where 'tis not improbable somewhat might be discovered. Meanwhile to what nation or person belonged that large urn found at Ashbury,§ containing mighty bones, and a buckler ; what those large urns found at Little Massingham ;|| or why the Anglesea urns are placed with their mouths downwards, remains yet undiscovered.

\* *Olai Wormii Monumenta et Antiquitat. Dan.*

† *Adolphus Cyprius in Annal. Sleswick. urnis adeo abundabat collis,*<sup>1</sup> &c.

‡ In Oxfordshire, *Camden.*

§ In Cheshire, *Twinus de rebus Albionicis.*

|| In Norfolk, *Hollingshead.*

<sup>1</sup> "The hillside was so covered with urns."—ED.

## CHAPTER III

PLASTERED and whited sepulchres were anciently affected in cadaverous and corrupted burials ; and the rigid Jews were wont to garnish the sepulchres of the righteous.\* Ulysses, in Hecuba, cared not how meanly he lived, so he might find a noble tomb after death.† Great princes affected great monuments ; and the fair and larger urns contained no vulgar ashes, which makes that disparity in those which time discovereth among us. The present urns were not of one capacity, the largest containing above a gallon, some not much above half that measure ; nor all one figure, wherein there is no strict conformity in the same or different countries ; observable from those represented by Casalius, Bosio, and others, though all found in Italy ; while many have handles, ears, and long necks, but most imitate a circular figure, in a spherical and round composure ; whether from any mystery, best duration or capacity, were but a conjecture. But the common form with necks was a proper figure, making our last bed like our first ; nor much unlike the urns of our nativity while we lay in the nether part of the earth,‡ and inward vault of our microcosm. Many urns are red, these but of a black colour somewhat smooth, and dully sounding, which begat some doubt, whether they were burnt, or only baked in oven or sun, according to the ancient way, in many bricks, tiles, pots, and testaceous works ; and, as the word *testa*<sup>1</sup> is properly to be taken, when occurring without addition and chiefly intended by Pliny, when he commendeth bricks and tiles of two years

\* Matt. xxiii. † *Euripides*. ‡ Ps. lxii. <sup>1</sup> "Brick, or tile."

old, and to make them in the spring. Nor only these concealed pieces, but the open magnificence of antiquity, ran much in the artifice of clay. Hereof the house of Mausolus was built, thus old Jupiter stood in the Capitol, and the statua of Hercules, made in the reign of Tarquinius Priscus, was extant in Pliny's days. And such as declined burning or funeral urns, affected coffins of clay according to the mode of Pythagoras, a way preferred by Varro. But the spirit of great ones was above these circumscriptions, affecting copper, silver, gold, and porphyry urns, wherein Severus lay, after a serious view and sentence on that which should contain him.\* Some of these urns were thought to have been silvered over, from sparklings in several pots, with small tinsel parcels; uncertain whether from the earth, or the first mixture in them.

Among these urns we could obtain no good account of their coverings; only one seemed arched over with some kind of brick-work. Of those found at Buxton, some were covered with flints, some, in other parts, with tiles; those at Yarmouth Caster were closed with Roman bricks, and some have proper earthen covers adapted and fitted to them. But in the Homeric urn of Patroclus, whatever was the solid tegument, we find the immediate covering to be a purple piece of silk: and such as had no covers might have the earth closely pressed into them, after which disposure were probably some of these, wherein we found the bones and ashes half mortared unto the sand and sides of the urn, and some long roots of quich, or dog's-grass, wreathed about the bones.

\* *Χωρήσεις τὸν ἀνθρώπον, ὃν ἡ οἰκουμένη οὐκ ἐχώρησεν.*<sup>1</sup>—*Dion.*

<sup>1</sup> "Thou shalt hold the man whom the world held not."—ED.

No lamps, included liquors, lacrymatories, or tear bottles, attended these rural urns, either as sacred unto the *manes*<sup>1</sup> or passionate expressions of their surviving friends. While with rich flames, and hired tears, they solemnized their obsequies, and in the most lamented monuments made one part of their inscriptions.\* Some find sepulchral vessels containing liquors, which time hath incrassated into jellies. For, besides these lacrymatories, notable lamps, with vessels of oils, and aromatical liquors, attended noble ossuaries; and some yet retaining a vinosity† and spirit in them, which, if any have tasted, they have far exceeded the palates of antiquity. Liquors not to be computed by years of annual magistrates, but by great conjunctions and the fatal periods of kingdoms.‡ The draughts of consulary date were but crude unto these, and Opimian wine§ but in the must unto them.

In sundry graves and sepulchres we meet with rings, coins, and chalices. Ancient frugality was so severe, that they allowed no gold to attend the corpse, but only that which served to fasten their teeth.|| Whether the Opaline stone in this were burnt upon the finger of the dead, or cast into the fire by some affectionate friend, it will consist with either custom. But other incinerable substances were found so fresh, that they could feel no singe from fire. These, upon view, were judged to be

\* *Cum lacrymis posuere.*<sup>2</sup>

† *Lazius.*

‡ About five hundred years.—*Plato.*

§ *Vinum Opimianum annorum centum.*<sup>3</sup>—*Petron.*

|| 12 *Tabul.* l. xi. *De Jure Sacro. Neve aurum adito ast quoi auro dentes vincti escunt im cum ilo sepelire urereve, se fraude esto.*<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Spirits of the dead."—*Ed.* <sup>2</sup> "Laid down with tears."—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> "Opimian wine a hundred years old."—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup> "Put in no gold: but it shall be lawful to bury or burn him with the gold that binds his teeth."—*Ed.*

wood ; but, sinking in water, and tried by the fire, we found them to be bone or ivory. In their hardness and yellow colour they most resembled box, which, in old expressions, found the epithet of eternal,\* and perhaps in such conservatories might have passed uncorrupted.

That bay leaves were found green in the tomb of S. Humbert,† after an hundred and fifty years, was looked upon as miraculous. Remarkable it was unto old spectators, that the cypress of the temple of Diana lasted so many hundred years. The wood of the ark, and olive-rod of Aaron, were older at the captivity ; but the cypress of the ark of Noah was the greatest vegetable of antiquity, if Josephus were not deceived by some fragments of it in his days : to omit the moor logs and fir trees found under-ground in many parts of England ; the undated ruins of winds, floods, or earthquakes, and which in Flanders still show from what quarter they fell, as generally lying in, a north-east position.‡

But though we found not these pieces to be wood, according to first apprehensions, yet we missed not altogether of some woody substance ; for the bones were not so clearly picked but some coals were found amongst them ; a way to make wood perpetual, and a fit associate for metal, whereon was laid the foundation of the great Ephesian temple, and which were made the lasting tests of old boundaries and landmarks. Whilst we look on these, we admire not observations of coals found fresh after four hundred years.§ In a long-

\* *Plin. l. xvi. Inter ξύλα άσαπῆ numerat Theophrastus.*<sup>1</sup>

† *Surius.* ‡ *Gorop. Becanus in Niloscopia.*

§ Of *Beringuccio nella pyrotechnia.*

<sup>1</sup> "Theophrastus counts them among timbers not liable to rot."—ED.



deserted habitation\* even egg-shells have been found fresh, not tending to corruption.

In the monument of King Childerick the iron relics were found all rusty and crumbling into pieces ; but our little iron pins, which fastened the ivory works, held well together, and lost not their magnetical quality, though wanting a tenacious moisture for the firmer union of parts ; although it be hardly drawn into fusion, yet that metal soon submitteth unto rust and dissolution. In the brazen pieces we admired not the duration, but the freedom from rust, and ill savour, upon the hardest attrition ; but now exposed unto the piercing atoms of air, in the space of a few months, they begin to spot and betray their green entrails. We conceive not these urns to have descended thus naked as they appear, or to have entered their graves without the old habit of flowers. The urn of Philopœmen was so laden with flowers and ribbons, that it afforded no sight of itself. The rigid Lycurgus allowed olive and myrtle. The Athenians might fairly except against the practice of Democritus, to be buried up in honey, as fearing to embezzle a great commodity of their country, and the best of that kind in Europe. But Plato seemed too frugally politick, who allowed no larger monument than would contain four heroick verses, and designed the most barren ground for sepulture : though we cannot commend the goodness of that sepulchral ground which was set at no higher rate than the mean salary of Judas. Though the earth had confounded the ashes of these ossuaries, yet the bones were so smartly burnt, that some thin plates of brass were found half melted among them. Whereby we

\* At Elmham.



apprehend they were not of the meanest carcases, perfunctorily fired, as sometimes in military, and commonly in pestilence, burnings; or after the manner of abject corpses, huddled forth and carelessly burnt, without the Esquiline Port at Rome; which was an affront continued upon Tiberius, while they but half burnt his body,\* and in the amphitheatre, according to the custom in notable malefactors; whereas Nero seemed not so much to fear his death as that his head should be cut off and his body not burnt entire.

Some, finding many fragments of skulls in these urns, suspected a mixture of bones; in none we searched was there cause of such conjecture, though sometimes they declined not that practice.—The ashes of Domitian† were mingled with those of Julia; of Achilles with those of Patroclus. All urns contained not single ashes; without confused burnings they affectionately compounded their bones; passionately endeavouring to continue their living unions. And when distance of death denied such conjunctions, unsatisfied affections conceived some satisfaction to be neighbours in the grave, to lie urn by urn, and touch but in their manes. And many were so curious to continue their living relations, that they contrived large and family urns, wherein the ashes of their nearest friends and kindred might successively be received,‡ at least some parcels thereof, while their collateral memorials lay in minor vessels about them.

Antiquity held too light thoughts from objects of

\* *Sueton. in vita Tib. Et in amphitheatro semiustulandum*,<sup>1</sup> not *Casaub.*

† *Sueton. in vita Domitian.*

‡ See the most learned and worthy Mr. Casaubon upon Antoninus.

<sup>1</sup> “And to be half burnt in the amphitheatre.”—ED.

mortality, while some drew provocatives of mirth from anatomies, \* and jugglers showed tricks with skeletons. When fiddlers made not so pleasant mirth as fencers, and men could sit with quiet stomachs, while hanging was played before them. † Old considerations made few mementos by skulls and bones upon their monuments. In the Egyptian obelisks and hieroglyphical figures it is not easy to meet with bones. The sepulchral lamps speak nothing less than sepulture, and in their literal draughts prove often obscene and antick pieces. Where we find *D.M.* ‡ it is obvious to meet with sacrificing *pateras*<sup>1</sup> and vessels of libation upon old sepulchral monuments. In the Jewish hypogæum§<sup>2</sup> and subterranean cell at Rome, was little observable beside the variety of lamps and frequent draughts of the holy candlestick. In authentick draughts of Anthony and Jerome we meet with thigh bones and death's-heads; but the cemeterial cells of ancient Christians and martyrs were filled with draughts of Scripture stories; not declining the flourishes of cypress, palms, and olive, and the mystical figures of peacocks, doves, and cocks; but iterately affecting the portraits of Enoch, Lazarus, Jonas, and the vision of Ezekiel, as hopeful draughts, and hinting imagery of the resurrection, which is the life of the grave, and sweetens our habitations in the land of moles and pismires.

\* *Sic erimus cuncti, &c. Ergo dum vivimus vivamus.*<sup>3</sup>

† Ἀγώνιον παλφεῖν.<sup>4</sup> A barbarous pastime at feasts, when men stood upon a rolling globe, with their necks in a rope and a knife in their hands, ready to cut it when the stone was rolled away; wherein if they failed, they lost their lives, to the laughter of their spectators.—*Athenæus.* ‡ *Diis manibus,*<sup>5</sup> § *Bosio.*

<sup>1</sup> "Bowls."—ED. <sup>2</sup> "Underground chamber."—ED. <sup>3</sup> "So shall we all be, etc. Therefore while we live let us live."—ED.

<sup>4</sup> "To play at a struggle."—ED.

<sup>5</sup> "To the gods of the lower world."—ED.

Gentile inscriptions precisely delivered the extent of men's lives, seldom the manner of their deaths, which history itself so often leaves obscure in the records of memorable persons. There is scarce any philosopher but dies twice or thrice in Laertius; nor almost any life without two or three deaths in Plutarch; which makes the tragical ends of noble persons more favourably resented by compassionate readers who find some relief in the election of such differences.

The certainty of death is attended with uncertainties, in time, manner, places. The variety of monuments hath often obscured true graves; and cenotaphs confounded sepulchres. For beside their real tombs, many have found honorary and empty sepulchres. The variety of Homer's monuments made him of various countries. Euripides\* had his tomb in Africa, but his sepulture in Macedonia. And Severus† found his real sepulchre in Rome, but his empty grave in Gallia.

He that lay in a golden urn‡ eminently above the earth, was not like to find the quiet of his bones. Many of these urns were broke by a vulgar discoverer in hope of enclosed treasure. The ashes of Marcellus§ were lost above ground, upon the like account. Where profit hath prompted, no age hath wanted such miners. For which the most barbarous expilators found the most civil rhetorick. Gold once out of the earth is no more due unto it; what was unreasonably committed to the ground, is reasonably resumed from it; let monuments and rich fabricks, not riches, adorn men's ashes. The commerce of the

\* *Pausan in Atticis.*

† *Lamprid. in vit. Alexand.*

‡ *Trajanus.—Dion.*

§ *Plut. in vit. Marcelli.*

The commission of the Gothish King Theodoric for finding out sepulchral treasure.—*Cassiodor. var. I. 4.*

living is not to be transferred unto the dead; it is not injustice to take that which none complains to lose, and no man is wronged where no man is possessor.

What virtue yet sleeps in this *terra damnata*<sup>1</sup> and aged cinders, were petty magic to experiment. These crumbling relicks and long fired particles superannuate such expectations; bones, hairs, nails, and teeth of the dead, were the treasures of old sorcerers. In vain we revive such practices; present superstition too visibly perpetuates the folly of our forefathers, wherein unto old observation\* this island was so complete, that it might have instructed Persia.

Plato's historian of the other world lies twelve days incorrupted, while his soul was viewing the large stations of the dead. How to keep the corpse seven days from corruption by anointing and washing, without exenteration, were an hazardable piece of art, in our choicest practice. How they made distinct separation of bones and ashes from fiery admixture, hath found no historical solution; though they seemed to make a distinct collection, and overlooked not Pyrrhus his toe which could not be burnt. Some provision they might make by fictile vessels, coverings, tiles, or flat stones, upon and about the body (and in the same field, not far from these urns, many stones were found under ground), as also by careful separation of extraneous matter, composing and raking up the burnt bones with forks, observable in that notable lamp of [Joan.] Galvanus.† Martianus, who had the sight of the *vas*

\* *Britannia bodie eam attonitè celebrat tantis ceremoniis ut dedisse Persis videri possit.*<sup>2</sup>—Plin. I. 29.

† To be seen in *Licet. de reconditis veterum lucernis* [p. 599, fol. 1653].

<sup>1</sup> "Accursed earth."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "Britain to-day observes the practice with such frenzied rites that it may be thought to have given it to the Persians."—ED.

*ustrinum*\* or vessel wherein they burnt the dead, found in the Esquiline field at Rome, might have afforded clearer solution. But their insatisfaction herein begat that remarkable invention in the funeral pyres of some princes, by incombustible sheets made with a texture of asbestos, incremable flax, or salamander's wool, which preserved their bones and ashes incommixed.

How the bulk of a man should sink into so few pounds of bones and ashes, may seem strange unto any who considers not its constitution, and how slender a mass will remain upon an open and urging fire of the carnal composition. Even bones themselves, reduced into ashes, do abate a notable proportion. And consisting much of a volatile salt, when that is fired out, make a light kind of cinders. Although their bulk be disproportionable to their weight, when the heavy principle of salt is fired out, and the earth almost only remaineth; observable in sawdust, which makes more ashes than oak, and discovers the common fraud of selling ashes by measure, and not by ponderation.

Some bones make best skeletons,† some bodies quick and speediest ashes. Who would expect a quick flame from hydropical Heraclitus? The poisoned soldier when his belly brake, put out two pyres in Plutarch.‡ But in the plague of Athens,§ one private pyre served two or three intruders; and the Saracens burnt in large heaps, by the king of Castile,|| showed how little fuel sufficeth. Though the funeral pyre of

\* *Typograph. Roma ex Martiano. Erat et vas ustrinum appellatum, quod in eo cadavera comburerentur. Cap. de Campo Esquilino.*<sup>1</sup>

† Old bones according to Lyserus. Those of young persons not tall nor fat according to Columbus.

‡ *In vita Gracc.*

§ *Thucydides.*

|| *Laurent. Valla.*

<sup>1</sup> "It was also called a burning vessel because in it corpses were burnt."—ED.

Patroclus took up an hundred foot,\* a piece of an old boat burnt Pompey; and if the burthen of Isaac were sufficient for an holocaust, a man may carry his own pyre.

From animals are drawn good burning lights, and good medicines against burning.† Though the seminal humour seems of a contrary nature to fire, yet the body completed proves a combustible lump, wherein fire finds flame even from bones, and some fuel almost from all parts; though the metropolis of humidity‡ seems least disposed unto it, which might render the skulls of these urns less burned than other bones. But all flies or sinks before fire almost in all bodies: when the common ligament is dissolved, the attenuable parts ascend, the rest subside in coal, calx, or ashes.

To burn the bones of the king of Edom for lime,§ seems no irrational ferity; but to drink of the ashes of dead relations,|| a passionate prodigality. He that hath the ashes of his friend, hath an everlasting treasure; where fire taketh leave, corruption slowly enters. In bones well burnt, fire makes a wall against itself; experimented in cupels, and tests of metals, which consist of such ingredients. What the sun compoundeth, fire analyzeth, not transmuteth. That devouring agent leaves almost always a morsel for the earth, whereof all things are but a colony; and which, if time permits, the mother element will have in their primitive mass again.

He that looks for urns and old sepulchral relicks, must not seek them in the ruins of temples, where no

\* Ἐκατόμπεδον ἔνθα ἢ ἔνθα.<sup>1</sup>

† *Alb. Ovor.*

‡ The brain.—*Hippocrates.*

§ Amos ii. 1.

|| As Artemisia of her husband Mausolus.

<sup>1</sup> "A hundred feet this way or that."—ED.



religion anciently placed them. These were found in a field, according to ancient custom, in noble or private burial; the old practice of the Canaanites, the family of Abraham, and the burying-place of Joshua, in the borders of his possessions; and also agreeable unto Roman practice to bury by highways, whereby their monuments were under eye;—memorials of themselves, and mementos of mortality unto living passengers; whom the epitaphs of great ones were fain to beg to stay and look upon them,—a language though sometimes used, not so proper in church inscriptions.\* The sensible rhetorick of the dead, to exemplarity of good life, first admitted the bones of pious men and martyrs within church walls, which in succeeding ages crept into promiscuous practice: while Constantine was peculiarly favoured to be admitted into the church porch, and the first thus buried in England, was in the days of Cuthred.

Christians dispute how their bodies should lie in the grave.† In urnal interment they clearly escaped this controversy. Though we decline the religious consideration, yet in cemeterial and narrower burying-places, to avoid confusion and cross-position, a certain posture were to be admitted: which even Pagan civility observed. The Persians lay north and south; the Megarians and Phœnicians placed their heads to the east; the Athenians, some think, towards the west, which Christians still retain. And Beda will have it to be the posture of our Saviour. That he was crucified with his face toward the west, we will not contend with tradition and probable account; but we

\* *Siste viator*.<sup>1</sup>

† *Kirkmannus de funer.*

<sup>1</sup> “Stay, traveller!”—ED.



applaud not the hand of the painter, in exalting his cross so high above those on either side: since hereof we find no authentic account in history, and even the crosses found by Helena, pretend no such distinction from longitude or dimension.

To be gnawed out of our graves, to have our skulls made drinking-bowls, and our bones turned into pipes, to delight and sport our enemies, are tragical abominations escaped in burning burials.

Urnal interments and burnt relicks lie not in fear of worms, or to be an heritage for serpents. In carnal sepulture, corruptions seem peculiar unto parts; and some speak of snakes out of the spinal marrow. But while we suppose common worms in graves, 'tis not easy to find any there; few in churchyards above a foot deep, fewer or none in churches though in fresh-decayed bodies. Teeth, bones, and hair, give the most lasting defiance to corruption. In an hydropical body, ten years buried in the churchyard, we met with a fat concretion, where the nitre of the earth, and the salt and lixivious liquor of the body, had coagulated large lumps of fat into the consistence of the hardest Castile soap, whereof part remaineth with us. After a battle with the Persians, the Roman corpses decayed in a few days, while the Persian bodies remained dry and uncorrupted. Bodies in the same ground do not uniformly dissolve, nor bones equally moulder; whereof in the opprobrious disease, we expect no long duration. The body of the Marquis of Dorset seemed sound and handsomely cereclothed, that after seventy-eight years was found uncorrupted.\* Common tombs preserve

\* Of Thomas, Marquis of Dorset, whose body being buried 1530, was 1608, upon the cutting open of the cerecloth, found

not beyond powder: a firmer consistence and compage of parts might be expected from arefaction, deep burial, or charcoal. The greatest antiquities of mortal bodies may remain in putrefied bones, whereof, though we take not in the pillar of Lot's wife, or metamorphosis of Ortelius,\* some may be older than pyramids, in the putrefied relicks of the general inundation. When Alexander opened the tomb of Cyrus, the remaining bones discovered his proportion, whereof urnal fragments afford but a bad conjecture, and have this disadvantage of grave interments, that they leave us ignorant of most personal discoveries. For since bones afford not only rectitude and stability but figure unto the body, it is no impossible physiognomy to conjecture at fleshy appendencies, and after what shape the muscles and carnous parts might hang in their full consistencies. A full-spread *cariola*† shows a well-shaped horse behind; handsome formed skulls give some analogy to fleshy resemblance. A critical view of bones makes a good distinction of sexes. Even colour is not beyond conjecture, since it is hard to be deceived in the distinction of Negroes' skulls.‡

perfect and nothing corrupted, the flesh not hardened, but in colour, proportion, and softness like an ordinary corpse newly to be interred.—*Burton's Descript. of Leicestershire.*

\* In his map of Russia.

† That part in the skeleton of a horse, which is made by the haunch-bones.

‡ The poet Dante, in his view of Purgatory, found gluttons so meagre and extenuated, that he conceited them to have been in the siege of Jerusalem, and that it was easy to have discovered *Homo* or *Omo* in their faces: M being made by the two lines of their cheeks, arching over the eye-brows to the nose, and their sunk eyes making O O which makes up *Omo*.

Dante's \* characters are to be found in skulls as well as faces. Hercules is not only known by his foot. Other parts make out their comproportions and inferences upon whole or parts. And since the dimensions of the head measure the whole body, and the figure thereof gives conjecture of the principal faculties, physiognomy outlives ourselves, and ends not in our graves.

Severe contemplators, observing these lasting relicks, may think them good monuments of persons past, little advantage to future beings ; and, considering that power which subdueth all things unto itself, that can resume the scattered atoms, or identify out of any thing, conceive it superfluous to expect a resurrection out of relicks : but the soul subsisting, other matter, clothed with due accidents, may solve the individuality. Yet the saints, we observe, arose from graves and monuments about the holy city. Some think the ancient patriarchs so earnestly desired to lay their bones in Canaan, as hoping to make a part of that resurrection ; and, though thirty miles from Mount Calvary, at least to lie in that region which should produce the first fruits of the dead. And if, according to learned conjecture, the bodies of men shall rise where their greatest relicks remain, many are not like to err in the topography of their resurrection, though their bones or bodies be after translated by angels into the field of Ezekiel's vision, or as some will order it, into the valley of judgment, or Jehosaphat.†

\* *Parén l'occhiaje anella senza gemme :*

*Cbi, nel viso degli uomini legge omo,*

*Bene avria qui'vi cono ciuto l'emme.—Purgat. xxiii. 31.<sup>1</sup>*

† *Tirin. in Ezek.*

<sup>1</sup> "The eye sockets seemed rings without gems : he who reads OMO in the human face would most plainly have traced there the 'm'."—ED.

## CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIANS have handsomely glossed the deformity of death by careful consideration of the body, and civil rites which take off brutal terminations : and though they conceived all reparable by a resurrection, cast not off all care of interment. And since the ashes of sacrifices burnt upon the altar of God were carefully carried out by the priests, and deposited in a clean field ; since they acknowledged their bodies to be the lodging of Christ, and temples of the Holy Ghost, they devolved not all upon the sufficiency of soul-existence ; and therefore with long services and full solemnities, concluded their last exequies, wherein to all distinctions the Greek devotion seems most pathetically ceremonious.\*

Christian invention hath chiefly driven at rites, which speak hopes of another life, and hints of a resurrection. And if the ancient Gentiles held not the immortality of their better part, and some subsistence after death, in several rites, customs, actions, and expressions, they contradicted their own opinions : wherein Democritus went high, even to the thought of a resurrection, as scoffingly recorded by Pliny.† What can be more express than the expression of Phocylides ? ‡ Or who would expect from Lucre-

\* *Rituale Græcum, operâ J. Goar, in officio exequiorum.*

† *Similis \* \* \* reviviscendi promissa Democrito vanitas, qui non revixit ipse. Quæ (malum) ista dementia est, iterari vitam morte ?* Plin. l. vii. c. 58.<sup>1</sup>

‡ *Καὶ ταχὰ δ' ἐκ γαίης ἐλπίζομεν εἰς φάος ἐλθεῖν λείψαν ἀποιχομένων, et deinceps.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Similar was the vain promise of a resurrection by Democritus, who did not live again himself. What madness is that, to think that life is renewed by death ?"—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "But we hope quickly to pass from earth to the light, that hath failed the dead," and so on.—ED.

tius\* a sentence of Ecclesiastes? Before Plato could speak, the soul had wings in Homer, which fell not, but flew out of the body into the mansions of the dead; who also observed that handsome distinction of Demas and Soma, for the body conjoined to the soul, and body separated from it. Lucian spoke much truth in jest, when he said that part of Hercules which proceeded from Alcmena perished, that from Jupiter remained immortal. Thus Socrates† was content that his friends should bury his body, so they would not think they buried Socrates; and, regarding only his immortal part, was indifferent to be burnt or buried. From such considerations, Diogenes might condemn sepulture, and, being satisfied that the soul could not perish, grow careless of corporal interment. The Stoicks, who thought the souls of wise men had their habitation about the moon, might make slight account of subterraneous deposition; whereas the Pythagoreans and transcorporating philosophers, who were to be often buried, held great care of their interment. And the Platonicks rejected not a due care of the grave, though they put their ashes to unreasonable expectations, in their tedious term of return and long sett revolution.

Men have lost their reason in nothing so much as their religion, wherein stones and clouts make martyrs; and, since the religion of one seems madness unto another, to afford an account or rational of old rites requires no rigid reader. That they kindled the pyre aversely, or turning their face from it, was an handsome symbol of unwilling ministration. That they

\* *Cedit enim retro de terra quod fuit ante in terram, &c.*<sup>1</sup>—*Lucret.*      † *Plato in Phæd.*

<sup>1</sup> “For that goeth back from the earth which came to the earth before.”—ED.

washed their bones with wine and milk; that the mother wrapped them in linen, and dried them in her bosom, the first fostering part and place of their nourishment; that they opened their eyes towards heaven before they kindled the fire, as the place of their hopes or original, were no improper ceremonies. Their last valediction,\* thrice uttered by the attendants, was also very solemn, and somewhat answered by Christians, who thought it too little, if they threw not the earth thrice upon the interred body. That, in strewing their tombs, the Romans affected the rose; the Greeks amaranthus and myrtle: that the funeral pyre consisted of sweet fuel, cypress, fir, larix, yew, and trees perpetually verdant, lay silent expressions of their surviving hopes. Wherein Christians, who deck their coffins with bays, have found a more elegant emblem; for that it, seeming dead, will restore itself from the root, and its dry and exsuccous leaves resume their verdure again; which, if we mistake not, we have also observed in furze. Whether the planting of yew in churchyards hold not its original from ancient funeral rites, or as an emblem of resurrection, from its perpetual verdure, may also admit conjecture.

They made use of musick to excite or quiet the affections of their friends, according to different harmonies. But the secret and symbolical hint was the harmonical nature of the soul; which, delivered from the body, went again to enjoy the primitive harmony of heaven, from whence it first descended; which, according to its progress traced by antiquity, came down by Cancer, and ascended by Capricornus.

\* *Vale, vale, nos te ordine quo natura permittet sequamur.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Farewell, farewell, may we follow thee in the order in which nature shall allow."—ED.



They burnt not children before their teeth appeared, as apprehending their bodies too tender a morsel for fire, and that their gristly bones would scarce leave separable relicks after the pyral combustion. That they kindled not fire in their houses for some days after was a strict memorial of the late afflicting fire. And mourning without hope, they had an happy fraud against excessive lamentation, by a common opinion that deep sorrows disturb their ghosts.\*

That they buried their dead on their backs, or in a supine position, seems agreeable unto profound sleep, and common posture of dying ; contrary to the most natural way of birth ; nor unlike our pendulous posture, in the doubtful state of the womb. Diogenes was singular, who preferred a prone situation in the grave ; and some Christians† like neither, who decline the figure of rest, and make choice of an erect posture.

That they carried them out of the world with their feet forward, not inconsonant unto reason, as contrary unto the native posture of man, and his production first into it ; and also agreeable unto their opinions, while they bid adieu unto the world, not to look again upon it ; whereas Mahometans who think to return to a delightful life again, are carried forth with their heads forward, and looking toward their houses.

They closed their eyes, as parts which first die, or first discover the sad effects of death. But their iterated clamations to excitate their dying or dead friends, or revoke them unto life again, was a vanity of affection ; as not presumably ignorant of the critical tests of death, by apposition of feathers, glasses, and reflection of figures, which dead eyes represent not :

\* *Tu manes ne læde meos.*<sup>1</sup>

† Russians, &c.

<sup>1</sup> "Vex not my spirit."—Ed.



which, however not strictly verifiable in fresh and warm *cadavers*, could hardly elude the test, in corpses of four or five days.\*

That they sucked in the last breath of their expiring friends, was surely a practice of no medical institution, but a loose opinion that the soul passed out that way, and a fondness of affection, from some Pythagorical foundation, that† the spirit of one body passed into another, which they wished might be their own.

That they poured oil upon the pyre, was a tolerable practice, while the intention rested in facilitating the accension. But to place good omens in the quick and speedy burning, to sacrifice unto the winds for a dispatch in this office, was a low form of superstition.

The archimime, or jester, attending the funeral train, and imitating the speeches, gesture, and manners of the deceased, was too light for such solemnities, contradicting their funeral orations and doleful rites of the grave.

That they buried a piece of money with them as a fee of the Elysian ferryman, was a practice full of folly. But the ancient custom of placing coins in considerable urns, and the present practice of burying medals in the noble foundations of Europe, are laudable ways of historical discoveries, in actions, persons, chronologies ; and posterity will applaud them.

We examine not the old laws of sepulture, exempting certain persons from burial or burning. But hereby we apprehend that these were not the bones of persons planet-struck or burnt with fire from heaven ; no relicks of traitors to their country, self-killers, or sacrilegious

\* At least by some difference from living eyes.

† *Francesco Perucci, Pompe funebri.*

malefactors ; persons in old apprehension unworthy of the earth ; condemned unto the Tartarus of hell, and bottomless pit of Pluto, from whence there was no redemption.

Nor were only many customs questionable in order to their obsequies, but also sundry practices, fictions, and conceptions, discordant or obscure, of their state and future beings. Whether unto eight or ten bodies of men to add one of a woman, as being more inflammable, and unctuously constituted for the better pyral combustion, were any rational practice ; or whether the complaint of Periander's wife be tolerable, that wanting her funeral burning, she suffered intolerable cold in hell, according to the constitution of the infernal house of Pluto, wherein cold makes a great part of their tortures ; it cannot pass without some question.

Why the female ghosts appear unto Ulysses, before the heroes and masculine spirits,—why the Psyche or soul of Tiresias is of the masculine gender,\* who, being blind on earth, sees more than all the rest in hell ; why the funeral suppers consisted of eggs, beans, smallage, and lettuce, since the dead are made to eat asphodels † about the Elysian meadows,—why, since there is no sacrifice acceptable, nor any propitiation for the covenant of the grave, men set up the deity of Morta, and fruitlessly adored divinities without ears, it cannot escape some doubt.

The dead seem all alive in the human Hades of Homer, yet cannot well speak, prophesy, or know the living, except they drink blood, wherein is the life of

\* In Homer : *Ψυχὴ Θηβαίου Τειρεσίου σκήπτρον ἔχων*.<sup>1</sup>

† In Lucian.

<sup>1</sup> "The soul of Theban Teiresias holding a sceptre."—ED.

man. And therefore the souls of Penelope's paramours, conducted by Mercury, chirped like bats, and those which followed Hercules, made a noise but like a flock of birds.

The departed spirits know things past and to come; yet are ignorant of things present. Agamemnon foretells what should happen unto Ulysses; yet ignorantly enquires what is become of his own son. The ghosts are afraid of swords in Homer; yet Sibylla tells Æneas in Virgil, the thin habit of spirits was beyond the force of weapons. The spirits put off their malice with their bodies, and Cæsar and Pompey accord in Latin hell; yet Ajax, in Homer, endures not a conference with Ulysses: and Deiphobus appears all mangled in Virgil's ghosts, yet we meet with perfect shadows among the wounded ghosts of Homer.

Since Charon in Lucian applauds his condition among the dead, whether it be handsomely said of Achilles, that living contemner of death, that he had rather be a ploughman's servant, than emperor of the dead? How Hercules his soul is in hell, and yet in heaven; and Julius his soul in a star, yet seen by Æneas in hell?—except the ghosts were but images and shadows of the soul, received in higher mansions, according to the ancient division of body, soul, and image, or *simulachrum*<sup>1</sup> of them both. The particulars of future beings must needs be dark unto ancient theories, which Christian philosophy yet determines but in a cloud of opinions. A dialogue between two infants in the womb concerning the state of this world, might handsomely illustrate our ignorance of the next, whereof methinks we yet discourse in Plato's den, and are but embryo philosophers.

<sup>1</sup> "An image."—ED.

Pythagoras escapes in the fabulous hell of Dante,\* among that swarm of philosophers, wherein, whilst we meet with Plato and Socrates, Cato is to be found in no lower place than purgatory. Among all the set, Epicurus is most considerable, whom men make honest without an Elysium, who contemned life without encouragement of immortality, and making nothing after death, yet made nothing of the king of terrors.

Were the happiness of the next world as closely apprehended as the felicities of this, it were a martyrdom to live; and unto such as consider none hereafter, it must be more than death to die, which makes us amazed at those audacities that durst be nothing and return into their chaos again. Certainly such spirits as could condemn death, when they expected no better being after, would have scorned to live, had they known any. And therefore we applaud not the judgment of Machiavel, that Christianity makes men cowards, or that with the confidence of but half-dying, the despised virtues of patience and humility have abased the spirits of men, which Pagan principles exalted; but rather regulated the wildness of audacities, in the attempts, grounds, and eternal sequels of death; wherein men of the boldest spirits are often prodigiously temerarious. Nor can we extenuate the valour of ancient martyrs, who contemned death in the uncomfortable scene of their lives, and in their decrepit martyrdoms did probably lose not many months of their days, or parted with life when it was scarce worth the living. For (beside that long time past holds no consideration unto a slender time to come) they had no small disadvantage from the constitution of old age,

\* *Del Inferno*, cant. 4.

which naturally makes men fearful, and complexionally superannuated from the bold and courageous thoughts of youth and fervent years. But the contempt of death from corporal animosity, promoteth not our felicity. They may sit in the orchestra, and noblest seats of heaven, who have held up shaking hands in the fire, and humanly contended for glory.

Meanwhile Epicurus lies deep in Dante's hell, wherein we meet with tombs enclosing souls which denied their immortalities. But whether the virtuous heathen, who lived better than he spake, or erring in the principles of himself, yet lived above philosophers of more specious maxims, lie so deep as he is placed, at least so low as not to rise against Christians, who believing or knowing that truth, have lastingly denied it in their practice and conversation—were a query too sad to insist on.

But all or most apprehensions rested in opinions of some future being, which ignorantly or coldly believed, begat those perverted conceptions, ceremonies, sayings, which Christians pity or laugh at. Happy are they which live not in that disadvantage of time, when men could say little for futurity, but from reason : whereby the noblest minds fell often upon doubtful deaths, and melancholy dissolutions. With these hopes, Socrates warmed his doubtful spirits against that cold potion ; and Cato, before he durst give the fatal stroke, spent part of the night in reading the Immortality of Plato, thereby confirming his wavering hand unto the animosity of that attempt.

It is the heaviest stone that melancholy can throw at a man, to tell him he is at the end of his nature ; or that there is no further state to come, unto which this

seems progressional, and otherwise made in vain. Without this accomplishment, the natural expectation and desire of such a state, were but a fallacy in nature; unsatisfied considerators would quarrel the justice of their constitutions, and rest content that Adam had fallen lower; whereby, by knowing no other original, and deeper ignorance of themselves, they might have enjoyed the happiness of inferior creatures, who in tranquillity possess their constitutions, as having not the apprehension to deplore their own natures, and, being framed below the circumference of these hopes, or cognition of better being, the wisdom of God hath necessitated their contentment: but the superior ingredient and obscured part of ourselves, whereto all present felicities afford no resting contentment, will be able at last to tell us, we are more than our present selves, and evacuate such hopes in the fruition of their own accomplishments.

## CHAPTER V

Now since these dead bones have already out-lived the living ones of Methuselah, and in a yard under ground, and thin walls of clay, out-worn all the strong and specious buildings above it; and quietly rested under the drums and tramlings of three conquests: what prince can promise such diuturnity unto his relicks, or might not gladly say,

*Sic ego componi versus in ossa velim ?* \* 1

Time, which antiquates antiquities, and hath an art to make dust of all things, hath yet spared these minor monuments.

\* *Tibullus.*

1 "So could I wish verses to be composed on my bones."—Ed.

In vain we hope to be known by open and visible conservatories, when to be unknown was the means of their continuation, and obscurity their protection. If they died by violent hands, and were thrust into their urns, these bones become considerable, and some old philosophers would honour them,\* whose souls they conceived most pure, which were thus snatched from their bodies, and to retain a stronger propension unto them; whereas they weariedly left a languishing corpse, and with faint desires of re-union. If they fell by long and aged decay, yet wrapt up in the bundle of time, they fall into indistinction, and make but one blot with infants. If we begin to die when we live, and long life be but a prolongation of death, our life is a sad composition; we live with death, and die not in a moment. How many pulses made up the life of Methuselah, were work for Archimedes: common counters sum up the life of Moses his man†. Our days become considerable, like petty sums, by minute accumulations; where numerous fractions make up but small round numbers; and our days of a span long, make not one little finger.‡

If the nearness of our last necessity brought a nearer conformity into it, there were a happiness in hoary hairs, and no calamity in half-senses. But the long habit of living indisposeth us for dying; when avarice makes us the sport of death, when even David grew

\* *Oracula Chaldaica cum scholiis Pselli et Phethonis.* Βλέη λιπόντων σώμα ψυχὰ καθαρώταται. *Ubi corpus relinquentium animæ purissimæ.*<sup>1</sup>

† In the Psalm of Moses.

‡ According to the ancient arithmetick of the hand, wherein the little finger of the right hand contracted, signified an hundred.—*Pierius in Hieroglyph.*

<sup>1</sup> “The souls of those are most pure who leave their bodies by force.”



politickly cruel, and Solomon could hardly be said to be the wisest of men. But many are too early old, and before the date of age Adversity stretcheth our days, misery makes Alcmena's nights,\* and time hath no wings unto it. But the most tedious being is that which can unwish itself, content to be nothing, or never to have been, which was beyond the malcontent of Job, who cursed not the day of his life, but his nativity; content to have so far been, as to have a title to future being, although he had lived here but in an hidden state of life, and as it were an abortion.

What song the Syrens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, though puzzling questions† are not beyond all conjecture. What time the persons of these ossuaries entered the famous nations of the dead,‡ and slept with princes and counsellors, might admit a wide solution. But who were the proprietaries of these bones, or what bodies these ashes made up, were a question above antiquarism; not to be resolved by man, nor easily perhaps by spirits, except we consult the provincial guardians, or tutelary observators. Had they made as good provision for their names, as they have done for their relicks, they had not so grossly erred in the art of perpetuation. But to subsist in bones, and be but pyramidally extant, is a fallacy in duration. Vain ashes which in the oblivion of names, persons, times, and sexes, have found unto themselves a fruitless continuation, and only arise unto posterity, as emblems of mortal vanities, antidotes against pride, vain-glory, and

\* One night as long as three.

† The puzzling questions of Tiberius unto grammarians.—*Marcel. Donatus in Suet.* ‡ Κλυτὰ ἔθνεα νεκρῶν. *Hom. Job.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The famous nations of the dead."—Ed.

madding vices. Pagan vain-glories which thought the world might last for ever, had encouragement for ambition ; and, finding no *atropos*<sup>1</sup> unto the immortality of their names, were never damp't with the necessity of oblivion. Even old ambitions had the advantage of ours, in the attempts of their vain-glories, who acting early, and before the probable meridian of time, have by this time found great accomplishment of their designs, whereby the ancient heroes have already outlasted their monuments, and mechanical preservations. But in this latter scene of time, we cannot expect such mummies unto our memories, when ambition may fear the prophecy of Elias,\* and Charles the Fifth can never hope to live within two Methuselahs of Hector.†

And therefore, restless inquietude for the diuturnity of our memories unto present considerations seems a vanity almost out of date, and superannuated piece of folly. We cannot hope to live so long in our names, as some have done in their persons. One face of Janus holds no proportion unto the other. 'Tis too late to be ambitious. The great mutations of the world are acted, or time may be too short for our designs. To extend our memories by monuments, whose death we daily pray for, and whose duration we cannot hope, without injury to our expectations in the advent of the last day, were a contradiction to our beliefs. We whose generations are ordained in this setting part of time, are providentially taken off from such imaginations ; and, being necessitated to eye the remaining particle of futurity, are naturally constituted unto thoughts of the next world, and cannot excusably decline the con-

\* That the world may last but six thousand years.

† Hector's fame lasting above two lives of Methuselah, before that famous prince was extant.

<sup>1</sup> One of the Fates.—ED.

sideration of that duration, which maketh pyramids pillars of snow, and all that's past a moment.

Circles and right lines limit and close all bodies, and the mortal right-lined circle\* must conclude and shut up all. There is no antidote against the opium of time, which temporally considereth all things : our fathers find their graves in our short memories, and sadly tell us how we may be buried in our survivors. Grave-stones tell truth scarce forty years.† Generations pass while some trees stand, and old families last not three oaks. To be read by bare inscriptions like many in Gruter,‡ to hope for eternity by enigmatical epithets or first letters of our names, to be studied by antiquaries, who we were, and have new names given us like many of the mummies,§ are cold consolations unto the students of perpetuity, even by everlasting languages.

To be content that times to come should only know there was such a man, not caring whether they knew more of him, was a frigid ambition in Cardan;|| disparaging his horoscopal inclination and judgment of himself. Who cares to subsist like Hippocrates's patients, or Achilles's horses in Homer, under naked nominations, without deserts and noble acts, which are the balsam of our memories, the *entelechia*<sup>1</sup> and soul of our subsistences? To be nameless in worthy deeds,

\* The character of death.

† Old ones being taken up, and other bodies laid under them.

‡ *Gruteri Inscriptiones Antiquæ*.

§ Which men show in several countries, giving them what names they please ; and unto some the names of the old Egyptian kings, out of Herodotus.

|| *Cuperem notum esse quod sim, non opto ut sciatur qualis sim.*—*Card. in vita propria.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Actuality."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "I would fain have it known that I am : I do not wish that it may be known what I am."—ED.

exceeds an infamous history. The Canaanitish woman lives more happily without a name, than Herodias with one. And who had not rather have been the good thief, than Pilate?

But the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy, and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity. Who can but pity the founder of the pyramids? Herostratus lives that burnt the temple of Diana, he is almost lost that built it. Time hath spared the epitaph of Adrian's horse, confounded that of himself. In vain we compute our felicities by the advantage of our good names, since bad have equal durations, and Thersites is like to live as long as Agamemnon. Who knows whether the best of men be known, or whether there be not more remarkable persons forgot, than any that stand remembered in the known account of time? Without the favour of the everlasting register, the first man had been as unknown as the last, and Methuselah's long life had been his only chronicle.

Oblivion is not to be hired. The greater part must be content to be as though they had not been, to be found in the register of God, not in the record of man. Twenty-seven names make up the first story before the flood, and the recorded names ever since contain not one living century. The number of the dead long exceedeth all that shall live. The night of time far surpasseth the day, and who knows when was the equinox? Every hour adds unto that current arithmetick, which scarce stands one moment. And since death must be the *Lucina*<sup>1</sup> of life, and even Pagans\* could doubt, whether thus to live were to

\* Euripides,

<sup>1</sup> The goddess of childbirth.—ED.

die ; since our longest sun sets at right descensions, and makes but winter arches, and therefore it cannot be long before we lie down in darkness, and have our light in ashes ;\* since the brother of death daily haunts us with dying mementos, and time that grows old in itself, bids us hope no long duration ;—diuturnity is a dream and folly of expectation.

Darkness and light divide the course of time, and oblivion shares with memory a great part even of our living beings ; we slightly remember our felicities, and the smartest strokes of affliction leave but short smart upon us. Sense endureth no extremities, and sorrows destroy us or themselves. To weep into stones are fables. Afflictions induce callosities ; miseries are slippery, or fall like snow upon us, which notwithstanding is no unhappy stupidity. To be ignorant of evils to come, and forgetful of evils past, is a merciful provision in nature, whereby we digest the mixture of our few and evil days, and, our delivered senses not relapsing into cutting remembrances, our sorrows are not kept raw by the edge of repetitions. A great part of antiquity contented their hopes of subsistancy with a transmigration of their souls,—a good way to continue their memories, while having the advantage of plural successions, they could not but act something remarkable in such variety of beings, and enjoying the fame of their passed selves, make accumulation of glory unto their last durations. Others, rather than be lost in the uncomfortable night of nothing, were content to recede into the common being, and make one particle of the public soul of all things, which was no more

\* According to the custom of the Jews, who place a lighted wax-candle in a pot of ashes by the corpse,—*Lco.*

than to return into their unknown and divine original again. Egyptian ingenuity was more unsatisfied, contriving their bodies in sweet consistencies, to attend the return of their souls. But all was vanity,\* feeding the wind, and folly. The Egyptian mummies, which Cambyzes or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth. Mummy is become merchandise, Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams.

In vain do individuals hope for immortality, or any patent from oblivion, in preservations below the moon; men have been deceived even in their flatteries, above the sun, and studied conceits to perpetuate their names in heaven. The various cosmography of that part hath already varied the names of contrived constellations; Nimrod is lost in Orion, and Osyris in the Dog-star. While we look for incorruption in the heavens, we find they are but like the earth;—durable in their main bodies, alterable in their parts; whereof, beside comets and new stars, perspectives begin to tell tales, and the spots that wander about the sun, with Phaeton's favour, would make clear conviction.

There is nothing strictly immortal, but immortality. Whatever hath no beginning, may be confident of no end;—which is the peculiar of that necessary essence that cannot destroy itself;—and the highest strain of omnipotency, to be so powerfully constituted as not to suffer even from the power of itself: all others have a dependent being and within the reach of destruction. But the sufficiency of Christian immortality frustrates all earthly glory, and the quality of either state after

\* *Omnia vanitas et pastio venti*, νομὴ ἀνέμου καὶ βόσκησις, *ut olim Aquila et Symmachus. v. Drus. Eccles.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “All is vanity and feeding the wind.” νομὴ ἀνέμου, etc., “feeding and pasturing of the wind.”—ED.

death, makes a folly of posthumous memory. God who can only destroy our souls, and hath assured our resurrection, either of our bodies or names hath directly promised no duration. Wherein there is so much of chance, that the boldest expectants have found unhappy frustration; and to hold long subsistence, seems but a scape in oblivion. But man is a noble animal, splendid in ashes, and pompous in the grave, solemnizing nativities and deaths with equal lustre, nor omitting ceremonies of bravery in the infamy of his nature.

Life is a pure flame, and we live by an invisible sun within us. A small fire sufficeth for life, great flames seemed too little after death, while men vainly affected precious pyres, and to burn like Sardanapalus; but the wisdom of funeral laws found the folly of prodigal blazes, and reduced undoing fires unto the rule of sober obsequies, wherein few could be so mean as not to provide wood, pitch, a mourner, and an urn.\*

Five languages secured not the epitaph of Gordianus.† The man of God lives longer without a tomb than any by one, invisibly interred by angels, and adjudged to obscurity, though not without some marks directing human discovery. Enoch and Elias, without

\* According to the epitaph of Rufus and Beronica, in Gruterus.

nec ex  
Eorum bonis plus inventum est, quam  
Quod sufficeret ad emendam pyram  
Et picem quibus corpora cremarentur,  
Et præfica conductæ, et olla emptæ.<sup>1</sup>

† In Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Egyptian, Arabic; defaced by Licinius the emperor.

<sup>1</sup> "Nor of their goods was found more than would suffice to buy a pyre and pitch, whereby their bodies might be burned, to hire a mourner and to buy an urn."—ED.



either tomb or burial, in an anomalous state of being, are the great examples of perpetuity, in their long and living memory, in strict account being still on this side death, and having a late part yet to act upon this stage of earth. If in the decretory term of the world we shall not all die but be changed, according to received translation, the last day will make but few graves; at least quick resurrections will anticipate lasting sepultures. Some graves will be opened before they be quite closed, and Lazarus be no wonder. When many that feared to die, shall groan that they can die but once, the dismal state is the second and living death, when life puts despair on the damned; when men shall wish the coverings of mountains, not of monuments, and annihilations shall be courted.

While some have studied monuments, others have studiously declined them, and some have been so vainly boisterous, that they durst not acknowledge their graves; wherein Alaricus\* seems most subtle, who had a river turned to hide his bones at the bottom. Even Sylla, that thought himself safe in his urn, could not prevent revenging tongues, and stones thrown at his monument. Happy are they whom privacy makes innocent, who deal so with men in this world, that they are not afraid to meet them in the next; who, when they die, make no commotion among the dead, and are not touched with that poetical taunt of Isaiah.†

Pyramids, arches, obelisks, were but the irregularities of vain-glory, and wild enormities of ancient magnanimity. But the most magnanimous resolution rests in the Christian religion, which trampleth upon

\* *Jornandes de rebus Geticis.*

† Isa. xiv. 16, &c.

pride, and sits on the neck of ambition, humbly pursuing that infallible perpetuity, unto which all others must diminish their diameters, and be poorly seen in angles of contingency.\*

Pious spirits who passed their days in raptures of futurity, made little more of this world, than the world that was before it, while they lay obscure in the chaos of pre-ordination, and night of their fore-beings. And if any have been so happy as truly to understand Christian annihilation, ecstasies, exolution, liquefaction, transformation, the kiss of the spouse, gustation of God, and ingression into the divine shadow, they have already had an handsome anticipation of heaven; the glory of the world is surely over, and the earth in ashes unto them.

To subsist in lasting monuments, to live in their productions, to exist in their names and predicament of chimeras, was large satisfaction unto old expectations, and made one part of their Elysiums. But all this is nothing in the metaphysicks of true belief. To live indeed, is to be again ourselves, which being not only an hope, but an evidence in noble believers, 'tis all one to lie in St. Innocent's † churchyard, as in the sands of Egypt. Ready to be anything, in the ecstasy of being ever, and as content with six foot as the *moles* of Adrianus. ‡

*tabésne cadavera solvat,  
An rogos, haud refert.*<sup>1</sup>—LUCAN.

\* *Angulus contingentiaë*, the least of angles.

† In Paris, where bodies soon consume.

‡ A stately mausoleum or sepulchral pile, built by Adrianus in Rome, where now standeth the castle of St. Angelo.

<sup>1</sup> "It matters not whether corruption or the funeral pile dissolve the body."—ED.

# BRAMPTON URNS

PARTICULARS OF SOME URNS FOUND IN BRAMPTON FIELD,  
FEBRUARY 1667-8



## BRAMPTON URNS

I THOUGHT I had taken leave of urns, when I had some years past given a short account of those found at Walsingham;\* but a new discovery being made, I readily obeyed your commands in a brief description thereof.

In a large arable field, lying between Buxton and Brampton, but belonging to Brampton, and not much more than a furlong from Oxnead-park, divers urns were found. A part of the field being designed to be inclosed, the workmen digged a ditch from north to south, and another from east to west, in both which they fell upon divers urns; but earnestly and carelessly digging, they broke all they met with, and finding nothing but ashes and burnt bones, they scattered what they found. Upon notice given unto me, I went myself to observe the same, and to have obtained a whole one; and though I met with two in the side of the ditch, and used all care I could with the workmen, yet they were broken. Some advantage there was from the wet season alone that day, the earth not readily falling from about them, as in the summer. When some were digging the north and south ditch, and others at a good distance the east and west one, those at this latter upon every stroke which was made at the other ditch, heard a hollow sound near to them,

\* See *Hydriotaphia, Urn Burial: or, a Discourse of the Sepulchral Urns lately found in Norfolk*, 8vo. London, printed 1658.

as though the ground had been arched, vaulted, or hollow, about them. It is very probable there are very many urns about this place, for they were found in both ditches, which were one hundred yards from each other; and this very sounding of the earth, which might be caused by hollow vessels in the earth, might make the same probable. There was nothing in them but fragments of burnt bones; not any such implements and extraneous substances as I found in the Walsingham urns: some pieces of skulls and teeth were easily discernible. Some were very large, some small, some had coverings, most none.

Of these pots none were found above three-quarters of a yard in the ground; whereby it appeareth, that in all this time the earth hath little varied its surface, though this ground hath been ploughed to the utmost memory of man. Whereby it may be also conjectured, that this hath never been a wood-land, as some conceive all this open part to have been; for in such places they made no common burying-places in old time, except for some special persons in groves: and likewise that there hath been an ancient habitation about these parts; for at Buxton also, not a mile off, urns have been found in my memory; but in their magnitude, figure, colour, posture, &c., there was no small variety; some were large and capacious, able to contain above two gallons, some of a middle, others of a smaller size. The great ones probably belonging to greater persons, or might be family urns, fit to receive the ashes successively of their kindred and relations, and therefore, of these, some had coverings of the same matter, either fitted to them, or a thin flat stone, like a grey slate, laid over them; and therefore also

great ones were but thinly found, but others in good number. Some were of large wide mouth, and bellies proportionable, with short necks, and bottoms of three inches diameter, and near an inch thick ; some small, with necks like jugs, and about that bigness ; the mouths of some few were not round, but after the figure of a circle compressed, not ordinarily to be imitated ; though some had small, yet none had pointed bottoms, according to the figures of those which are to be seen in *Roma Sotterranea*, *Viginerus*, or *Mascardus*.

In the colours also there was great variety ; some were whitish, some blackish, and inclining to a blue, others yellowish, or dark red, arguing the variety of their materials. Some fragments, and especially bottoms of vessels, which seemed to be handsome neat pans, were also found of a fine coral-like red, somewhat like Portugal vessels, as though they had been made out of some fine Bolary earth, and very smooth ; but the like had been found in divers places, as Dr. Casaubon hath observed about the pots found at Newington, in Kent, and as other pieces do yet testify, which are to be found at Burrow Castle, an old Roman station, not far from Yarmouth.

Of the urns, those of the larger sort, such as had coverings, were found with their mouths placed upwards ; but great numbers of the others were, as they informed me (and one I saw myself), placed with their mouth downwards, which were probably such as were not to be opened again, or receive the ashes of any other person. Though some wondered at this position, yet I saw no inconveniency in it ; for the earth being closely pressed, and especially in minor-mouthed pots, they stand in a posture as like to continue as the other,



as being less subject to have the earth fall in, or the rain to soak into them. And the same posture has been observed in some found in other places, as Holingshead delivers of divers found in Anglesea.

Some had inscriptions, the greatest part none; those with inscriptions, were of the largest sort, which were upon the reverted verges thereof. The greatest part of those which I could obtain were somewhat obliterated: yet some of the letters to be made out: the letters were between lines, either single or double, and the letters of some few, after a fair Roman stroke, others more rudely and illegibly drawn, wherein there seemed no great variety; "NUON" being upon very many of them; only upon the inside of the bottom of a small red pan-like vessel, with a glaze, or varnish, like pots which come from Portugal, but finer, were legibly set down in embossed letters, *CRACUNA F.*; which might imply *Gracuna figulus*, or *Gracuna fecit*, the name of the manufactor; for inscriptions commonly signified the name of the person interred, the names of servants official to such provisions, or the name of the artificer, or manufactor of such vessels; all which are particularly exemplified by the learned Licetus,\* where the same inscription is often found, it is probably of the artificer, or where the name also is in the genitive case, as he also observeth.

Out of one was brought unto me a silver denarius, with the head of Diva Faustina on the obverse side, and with this inscription, *Diva Augusta Faustina*, and on the reverse the figures of the emperor and empress joining their right hands, with this inscription, *Concordia*; the same is to be seen in Augustino, and must

\* Vid. *Licet. de Lucernis*.

be coined after the death of Faustina (who lived three years wife unto Antoninus Pius), from the title of Diva, which was not given them before their deification. I also received from some men and women then present, coins of Posthumus and Tetricus, two of the thirty tyrants in the reign of Galienus, which being of much later date, begat an inference that burning of the dead and urn-burial lasted longer, at least in this country, than is commonly supposed. Good authors conceive that this custom ended with the reign of the Antonini, whereof the last was Antoninus Heliogabalus, yet these coins extend about fourscore years lower; and since the head of Tetricus is made with a radiated crown, it must be conceived to have been made after his death, and not before his consecration, which, as the learned Tristan conjectures, was most probably in the reign of the emperor Tacitus, and the coin not made, or at least not issued abroad, before the time of the emperor Probus, for Tacitus reigned but six months and a half, his brother Florianus but two months, unto whom Probus succeeding, reigned five years.

In the digging they brake divers glasses and finer vessels, which might contain such liquors as they often buried, in or by the urns; the pieces of glass were fine and clear, though thick; and a piece of one was finely streaked with smooth white streaks upon it. There were also found divers pieces of brass, of several figures; and one piece which seemed to be of bell-metal. And in one urn was found a nail two inches long; whether to declare the trade or occupation of the person is uncertain. But upon the monuments of smiths, in Gruter, we meet with the figures of hammers, pincers, and the like; and we find the figure of a

cobbler's awl on the tomb of one of that trade, which was in the custody of Berini, as Argulus hath set it down in his notes upon *Onuphrius, of the antiquities of Verona*.

Now, though urns have been often discovered in former ages, many think it strange there should be many still found, yet assuredly there may be great numbers still concealed. For, though we should not reckon upon any who were thus buried before the time of the Romans (although that the Druids were thus buried it may be probable, and we read of the urn of Chindonactes, a Druid, found near Dijon in Burgundy, largely discoursed by Licetus), and though I say, we take not in any infant which was *minor igne rogi*,<sup>1</sup> before seven months, or appearance of teeth, nor should account this practice of burning among the Britons higher than Vespasian, when it is said by Tacitus, that they conformed unto the manners and customs of the Romans, and so both nations might have one way of burial; yet from his days, to the dates of these urns, were about two hundred years. And therefore if we fall so low as to conceive there were buried in this nation yearly but twenty thousand persons, the account of the buried persons would amount unto four millions, and consequently so great a number of urns dispersed through the land, as may still satisfy the curiosity of succeeding times, and arise unto all ages.

The bodies whose reliques these urns contained seemed thoroughly burned; for beside pieces of teeth, there were found few fragments of bones, but rather ashes in hard lumps and pieces of coals, which were often so fresh, that one sufficed to make a good draught of its urn, which still remaineth with me.

<sup>1</sup> "Too young for burning upon the funeral pile."—ED.

Some persons digging at a little distance from the urn places, in hopes to find something of value, after they had digged about three-quarters of a yard deep, fell upon an observable piece of work, whose description [hereupon followeth]. The work was square, about two yards and a quarter on each side. The wall, or outward part, a foot thick, in colour red, and looked like brick ; but it was solid, without any mortar, or cement, or figured brick in it, but of an whole piece, so that it seemed to be framed and burnt in the same place where it was found. In this kind of brickwork were thirty-two holes, of about two inches and a half diameter, and two above a quarter of a circle in the east and west sides. Upon two of these holes on the east side, were placed two pots, with their mouths downward ; putting in their arms they found the work hollow below and the earth being cleared off, much water was found below them ; to the quantity of a barrel, which was conceived to have been the rain-water which soaked in through the earth above them.

The upper part of the work being broke, and opened, they found a floor about two foot below, and then digging onward, three floors successively under one another, at the distance of a foot and half, the floors being of a slaty, not bricky substance ; in these partitions some pots were found, but broke by the workmen, being necessitated to use hard blows for the breaking of the floors ; and in the last partition but one, a large pot was found of a very narrow mouth, short ears, of the capacity of fourteen pints, which lay in an inclining posture, close by, and somewhat under a kind of arch in the solid wall, and by the great care of my worthy friend, Mr. William Marsham, who

employed the workmen, was taken up whole, almost full of water, clean, and without smell, and insipid, which being poured out, there still remains in the pot a great lump of an heavy crusty substance. What work this was we must as yet reserve unto better conjecture. Meanwhile we find in Gruter that some monuments of the dead had divers holes successively to let in the ashes of their relations ; but holes in such a great number to that intent, we have not anywhere met with.

About three months after, my noble and honoured friend, Sir Robert Paston, had the curiosity to open a piece of ground in his park at Oxnead, which adjoined unto the former field, where fragments of pots were found, and upon one the figure of a well-made face ; and there was also found an unusual coin of the emperor Volusianus, having on the obverse the head of the emperor, with a radiated crown, and this inscription, *Imp. Cæs. C. Vib. Volusiano Aug.* ; that is, *Imperatorī Cæsari Caio Vibio Volusiano Augusto*. On the reverse an human figure, with the arms somewhat extended, and at the right foot an altar, with the inscription *Pietas*. This emperor was son unto Caius Vibius Tribonianus Gallus, with whom he jointly reigned after the Decii, about the year 254 ; both he himself, and his father, were slain by the emperor Æmilianus. By the radiated crown this piece should be coined after his death and consecration, but in whose time it is not clear in history. But probably this ground had been opened and digged before, though out of the memory of man, for we found divers small pieces of pots, sheep's bones, sometimes an oyster-shell a yard deep in the earth.

# DREAMS





## ON DREAMS

HALF our days we pass in the shadow of the earth ; and the brother of death exacteth a third part of our lives. A good part of our sleep is peered out with visions and fantastical objects, wherein we are confessedly deceived. The day supplieth us with truths ; the night with fictions and falsehoods, which uncomfortably divide the natural account of our beings. And, therefore, having passed the day in sober labours and rational enquiries of truth, we are fain to partake ourselves unto such a state of being, wherein the soberest heads have acted all the monstrosities of melancholy, and which unto open eyes are no better than folly and madness.

Happy are they that go to bed with grand music, like Pythagoras, or have ways to compose the fantastical spirit, whose unruly wanderings take off inward sleep, filling our heads with St. Anthony's visions, and the dreams of Lipara in the sober chambers of rest.

Virtuous thoughts of the day lay up good treasures for the night ; whereby the impressions of imaginary forms arise into sober similitudes, acceptable unto our slumbering selves and preparatory unto divine impressions. Hereby Solomon's sleep was happy. Thus prepared, Jacob might well dream of angels upon a

pillow of stone. And the best sleep of Adam might be the best of any after.

That there should be divine dreams seems unreasonably doubted by Aristotle. That there are demoniacal dreams we have little reason to doubt. Why may there not be angelical? If there be guardian spirits, they may not be inactively about us in sleep; but may sometimes order our dreams: and many strange hints, instigations, or discourses, which are so amazing unto us, may arise from such foundations.

But the phantasms of sleep do commonly walk in the great road of natural and animal dreams, wherein the thoughts or actions of the day are acted over and echoed in the night. Who can therefore wonder that Chrysostom should dream of St. Paul, who daily read his epistles; or that Cardan, whose head was so taken up about the stars, should dream that his soul was in the moon! Pious persons, whose thoughts are daily busied about heaven, and the blessed state thereof, can hardly escape the nightly phantasms of it, which though sometimes taken for illuminations, or divine dreams, yet rightly perpended may prove but animal visions, and natural night-scenes of their awaking contemplations.

Many dreams are made out by sagacious exposition, and from the signature of their subjects; carrying their interpretation in their fundamental sense and mystery of similitude, whereby, he that understands upon what natural fundamental every notion dependeth, may, by symbolical adaptation, hold a ready way to read the characters of Morpheus. In dreams of such a nature, Artemidorus, Achmet, and Astrampsichus, from Greek, Egyptian, and Arabian oneiro-criticism, may

hint some interpretation : who, while we read of a ladder in Jacob's dream, will tell us that ladders and scalary ascents signify preferment ; and while we consider the dream of Pharaoh, do teach us that rivers overflowing speak plenty, lean oxen, famine and scarcity ; and therefore it was but reasonable in Pharaoh to demand the interpretation from his magicians, who, being Egyptians, should have been well versed in symbols and the hieroglyphical notions of things. The greatest tyrant in such divinations was Nabuchodonosor, while, besides the interpretation, he demanded the dream itself ; which being probably determined by divine immission, might escape the common road of phantasms, that might have been traced by Satan.

When Alexander, going to besiege Tyre, dreamt of a Satyr, it was no hard exposition for a Grecian to say, "Tyre will be thine." He that dreamed that he saw his father washed by Jupiter and anointed by the sun, had cause to fear that he might be crucified, whereby his body would be washed by the rain, and drop by the heat of the sun. The dream of Vespasian was of harder exposition ; as also that of the emperor Mauritius, concerning his successor Phocas. And a man might have been hard put to it, to interpret the language of Æsculapius, when to a consumptive person he held forth his fingers ; implying thereby that his cure lay in dates, from the homonymy of the Greek, which signifies dates and fingers.

We owe unto dreams that Galen was a physician, Dion an historian, and that the world hath seen some notable pieces of Cardan ; yet, he that should order his affairs by dreams, or make the night a rule unto the day, might be ridiculously deluded ; wherein

Cicero is much to be pitied, who having excellently discoursed of the vanity of dreams, was yet undone by the flattery of his own, which urged him to apply himself unto Augustus.

However dreams may be fallacious concerning outward events, yet may they be truly significant at home; and whereby we may more sensibly understand ourselves. Men act in sleep with some conformity unto their awaked senses; and consolations or discouragements may be drawn from dreams which intimately tell us ourselves. Luther was not like to fear a spirit in the night, when such an apparition would not terrify him in the day. Alexander would hardly have run away in the sharpest combats of sleep, nor Demosthenes have stood stoutly to it, who was scarce able to do it in his prepared senses. Persons of radical integrity will not easily be perverted in their dreams, nor noble minds do pitiful things in sleep. Crassus would have hardly been bountiful in a dream, whose fist was so close awake. But a man might have lived all his life upon the sleeping hand of Antonius.

There is an art to make dreams, as well as their interpretations; and physicians will tell us that some food makes turbulent, some give quiet, dreams. Cato, who doated upon cabbage, might find the crude effects thereof in his sleep; wherein the Egyptians might find some advantage by their superstitious abstinence from onions. Pythagoras might have [had] calmer sleeps, if he [had] totally abstained from beans. Even Daniel, the great interpreter of dreams, in his leguminous diet, seems to have chosen no advantageous food for quiet sleeps, according to Grecian physic.

To add unto the delusion of dreams, the fantastical

objects seem greater than they are ; and being beheld in the vaporous state of sleep, enlarge their diameters unto us ; whereby it may prove more easy to dream of giants than pigmies. Democritus might seldom dream of atoms, who so often thought of them. He almost might dream himself a bubble extending unto the eighth sphere. A little water makes a sea ; a small puff of wind a tempest. A grain of sulphur kindled in the blood may make a flame like *Ætna* ; and a small spark in the bowels of *Olympias* a lightning over all the chamber.

But, beside these innocent delusions, there is a sinful state of dreams. Death alone, not sleep, is able to put an end unto sin ; and there may be a night-book of our iniquities ; for beside the transgressions of the day, casuists will tell us of mortal sins in dreams, arising from evil precogitations ; meanwhile human law regards not noctambulos ; and if a night-walker should break his neck, or kill a man, takes no notice of it.

Dionysius was absurdly tyrannical to kill a man for dreaming that he had killed him ; and really to take away his life, who had but fantastically taken away his. *Lamia* was ridiculously unjust to sue a young man for a reward, who had confessed that pleasure from her in a dream which she had denied unto his awaking senses : conceiving that she had merited somewhat from his fantastical fruition and shadow of herself. If there be such debts, we owe deeply unto sympathies ; but the common spirit of the world must be ready in such arrearages.

If some have swooned, they may have also died in dreams, since death is but a confirmed swooning. Whether *Plato* died in a dream, as some deliver, he

must rise again to inform us. That some have never dreamed, is as improbable as that some have never laughed. That children dream not the first half-year; that men dream not in some countries, with many more, are unto me sick men's dreams; dreams out of the ivory gate, and visions before midnight.

PLYMOUTH

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